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As their date continues, Tina asks Kaoru to snap some pictures of her--the photo shoot turns into a walk down memory lane, as Tina recounts a story about a guy she liked but avoided because she was afraid of him hating her. But when she reveals who the mystery man is, will it be enough to win Kaoru's heart? Aoi has a little secret to share with Kaoru, too. Can Kaoru handle it all?!

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Ai Yori Aoshi

BY
KOU FUMIZUKI

藍より青し

AI YORI AOSHI™

VOLUME 14

STORY & ART
BY
KOU FUMIZUKI

TOKYOPOP®

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Ai Yori Aoshi Vol. 14
created by Kou Fumizuki

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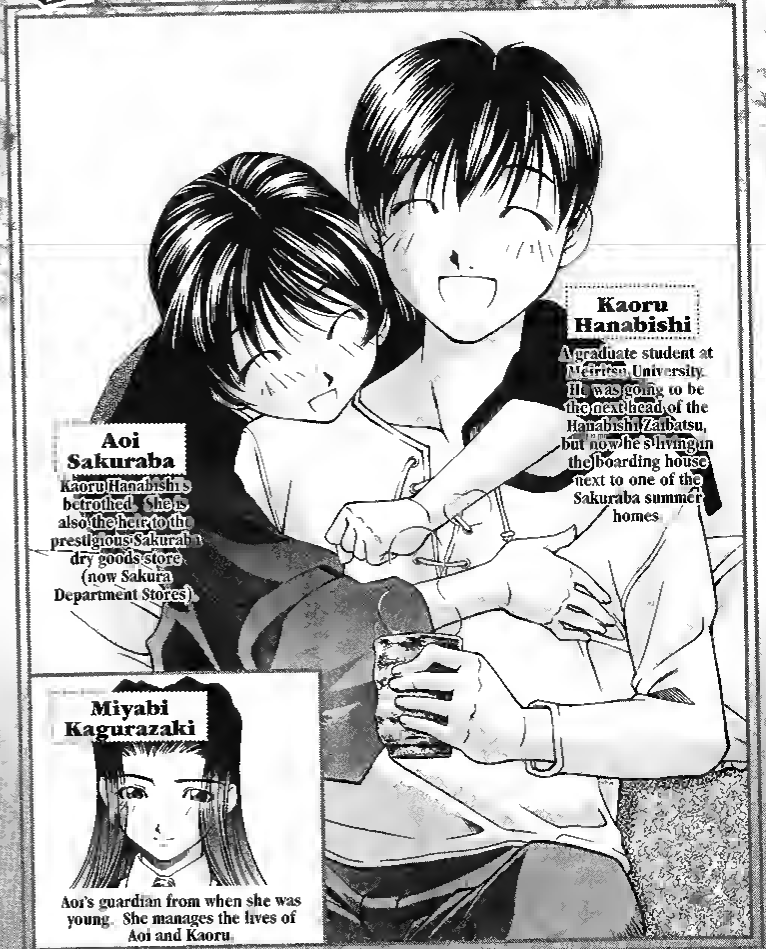
Summary of the story so far...


Kaoru Hanabishi
A graduate student at Meiritsu University. He was going to be the next head of the Hanabishi Zaibatsu, but now he's living in the boarding house next to one of the Sakuraba summer homes.
Aoi Sakuraba
Kaoru Hanabishi's betrothed. She is also the heir to the prestigious Sakuraba dry goods store (now Sakura Department Stores).
Miyabi Kagurazaki
Aoi's guardian from when she was young. She manages the lives of Aoi and Kaoru.

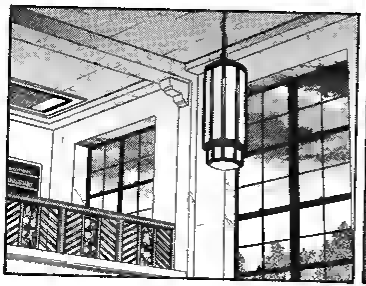
Takeo Minazuki
A third-year student in the photography club. She's clumsy and awkward, but she tries her hardest at everything she does.
Tina Foster
A fourth-year student at Meiritsu University. She, like Kaoru, is in the photography club. An American who was raised in Hakata.
Mayu Miyuki
The daughter of the head of Miyuki Fabrics, she entered Meiritsu University at the age of sixteen through a special consideration for students who have lived abroad. She met Kaoru when she was little, and even now, she is in love with him.
Chizuru Aizawa
Chika's classmate. She was invited by Chika to join the swimming club, even though she can't swim. She has a gentle, quiet personality.
Chika Minazuki
Taeko's cousin, a student in her first year of high school. An energetic girl who always has a tan. She's staying in the boarding house next to the Sakuraba manor.
Natsuki Komiya
Chika's classmate and a fellow member of the swimming club. She's always bright and energetic. She's under the misguided assumption that Kaoru is Chika's boyfriend.
Uzume (Ferret)
It was being raised by Tina, but now for some reason, it has gotten attached to Miyabi.

Kaoru Hanabishi was torn away from his mother when he was very young and raised as the heir of the Hanabishi Zaibatsu; however, he found he was unable to endure the harsh responsibilities placed on him, and he ran away from home to live by himself. He continued life in this fashion right up until the arrival of Aoi Sakuraba, who had been his betrothed and who loved him for eighteen years. Kaoru was blown away by her devotion, but her request for him to go back to the Hanabishi was the one thing he could not do. Aoi recognized the pain this caused Kaoru, so she decided to leave her own family, the Sakuraba, instead. Rather than lose her daughter, Aoi's mother conceded to allow the two of them to live together.

The couple moved to a western-style house that had previously been one of the Sakuraba's summer homes, and they now share the estate with Aoi's guardian, Miyabi Kagurazaki. There is a catch, though--while Aoi and Miyabi live in the main house, Kaoru has to live in the boarding house adjacent to it.

Shortly after, Tina Foster and Taeko Minazuki, members of Kaoru's photography club, moved into the boarding house as well. In order to avoid creating a scandal for the Sakuraba family, Aoi must keep up the pretense that she is Kaoru's landlady, and not his fiancée.

Some time has passed since the charade began. Mayu Miyuki has returned from England, and Taeko's cousin, Chika Minazuki, has joined the group of friends. Ironically, as more women gather around Kaoru, his and Aoi's feelings for each other grow deeper and deeper.



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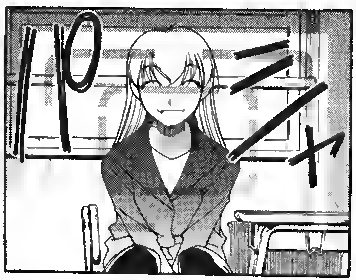
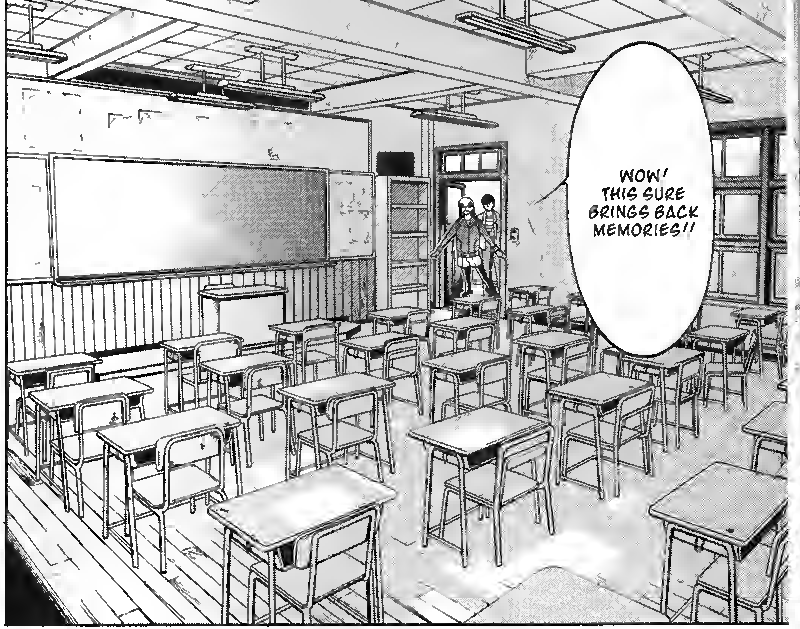
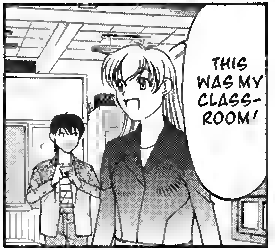
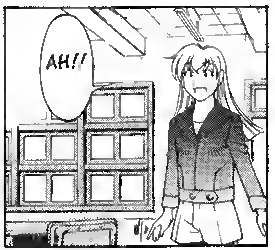
IT'S SO TINY!!
IT SEEMED SO MUCH BIGGER BACK THEN.

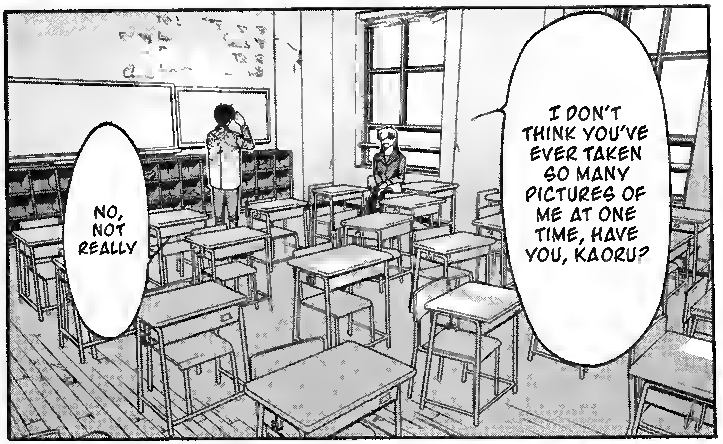



WOW! THIS SURE BRINGS BACK MEMORIES!!

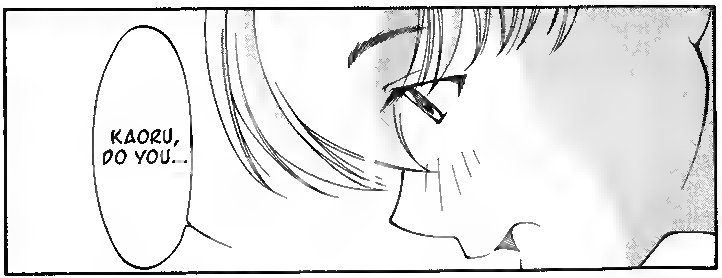
CHECK IT OUT!
THIS WAS MY SEAT!

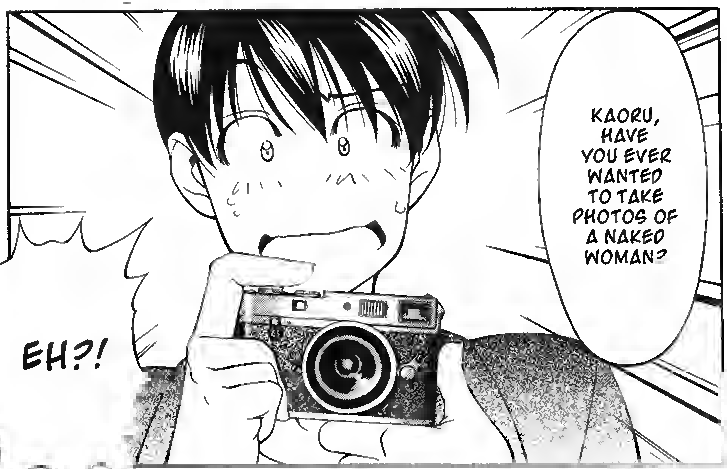

THIS WAS MY CLASS-ROOM!


AH!!

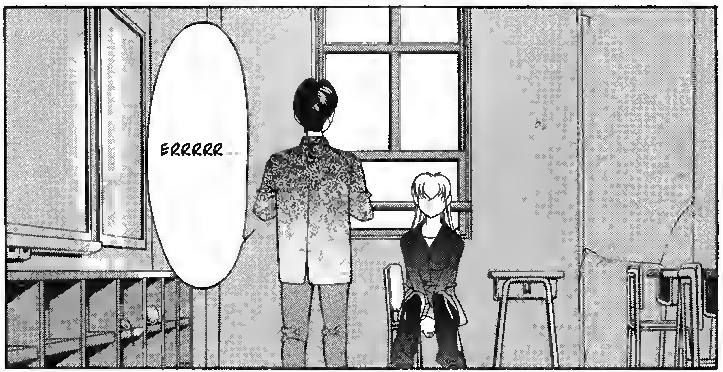

I DON'T THINK YOU'VE EVER TAKEN SO MANY PICTURES OF ME AT ONE TIME, HAVE YOU, KAORU?
NO, NOT REALLY

OH, HEY, KAORU
YEAH?

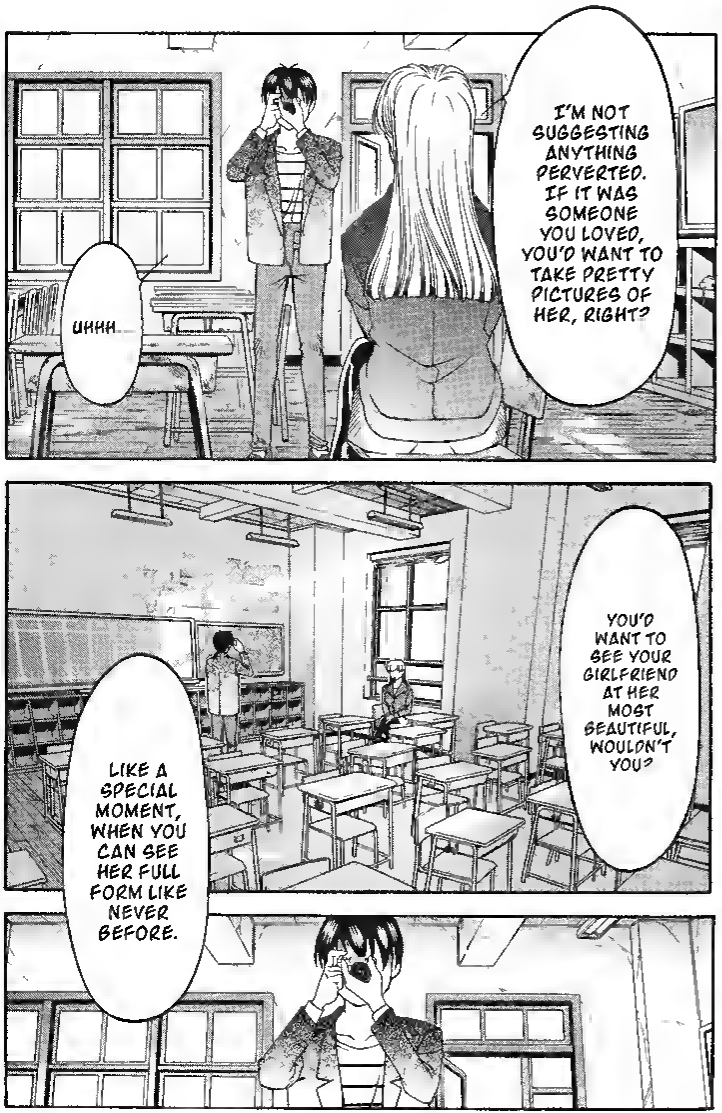

KAORU, DO YOU...


KAORU, HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO TAKE PHOTOS OF A NAKED WOMAN?
EH?!

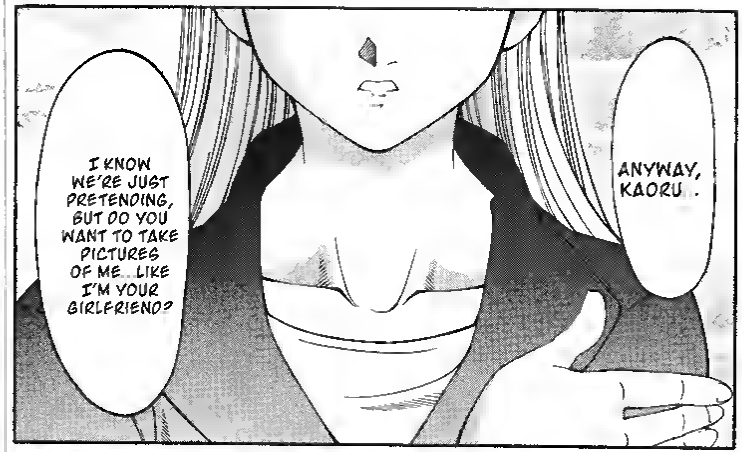
OF C-COURSE NOT! I-I'VE NEVER EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT IT!
WELL, MAYBE YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT IT.


ERRRR...

UM, HEE HEE HEE
You dirty bird! Youre thinking nasty thoughts!
YOU CAN'T DODGE THE QUESTION BY LAUGHING IT OFF!


I'M NOT SUGGESTING ANYTHING PERVERTED. IF IT WAS SOMEONE YOU LOVED, YOU'D WANT TO TAKE PRETTY PICTURES OF HER, RIGHT?
UHHH
YOU'D WANT TO SEE YOUR GIRLFRIEND AT HER MOST BEAUTIFUL, WOULDN'T YOU?
LIKE A SPECIAL MOMENT, WHEN YOU CAN SEE HER FULL FORM LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

10
ミシッ

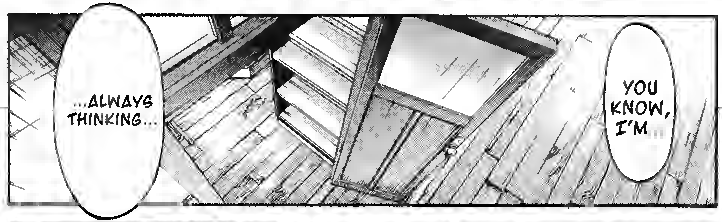

ANYWAY, KAORU.
I KNOW WE'RE JUST PRETENDING, BUT DO YOU WANT TO TAKE PICTURES OF ME...LIKE I'M YOUR GIRLFRIEND?

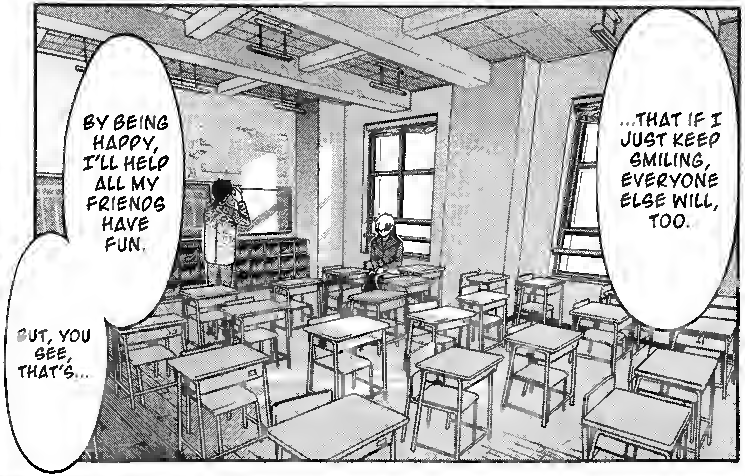
I WASN'T SURE, THIS WHOLE TIME...
...BUT BEING HERE RIGHT NOW...
I REALLY AM GLAD WE TOOK THIS TRIP...
IF IT'S FOR THE CAMERA, KAORU, IF YOU'RE LOOKING AT ME THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER...
DID YOU GET IT?
blush
THANK YOU, KAORU.

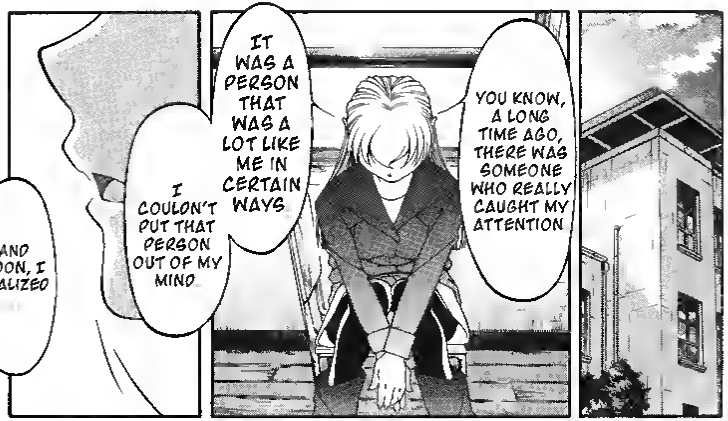
...
BECAUSE
I...
I WAS SCARED TO BE ALONE

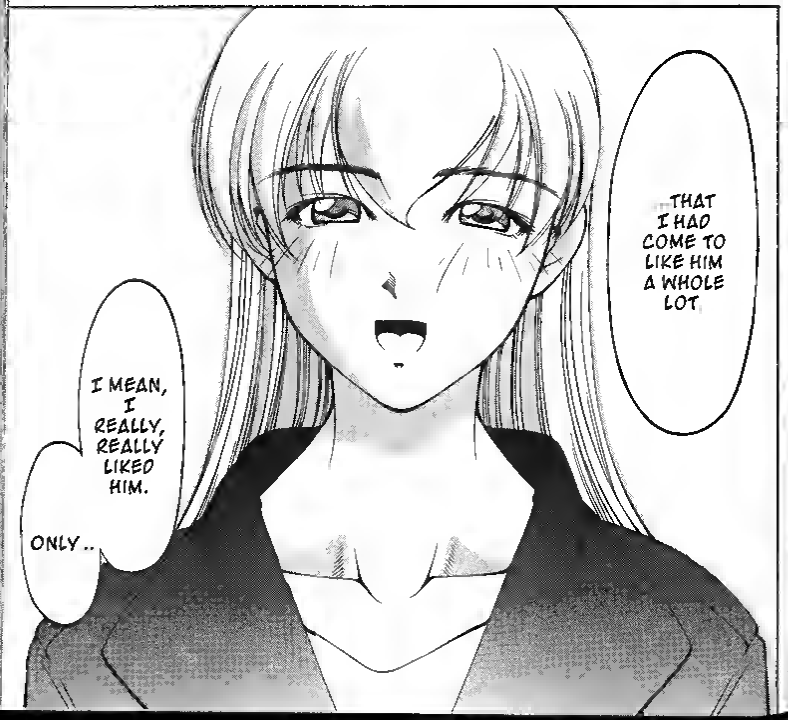
I WAS SCARED OF PEOPLE HATING ME.
I WAS SCARED OF PEOPLE NOT LIKING ME.

I WANTED TO REVEAL EVERY-THING.
THE REASON WE CAME TO KYUSHU, AND THE REASON WE CAME TO THIS SCHOOL, WAS THAT I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU, KAORU.


...ALWAYS THINKING...
YOU KNOW, I'M


BY BEING HAPPY, I'LL HELP ALL MY FRIENDS HAVE FUN.
...THAT IF I JUST KEEP SMILING, EVERYONE ELSE WILL, TOO.
BUT, YOU SEE, THAT'S...


AND SOON, I REALIZED
I COULDN'T PUT THAT PERSON OUT OF MY MIND
IT WAS A PERSON THAT WAS A LOT LIKE ME IN CERTAIN WAYS
YOU KNOW, A LONG TIME AGO, THERE WAS SOMEONE WHO REALLY CAUGHT MY ATTENTION

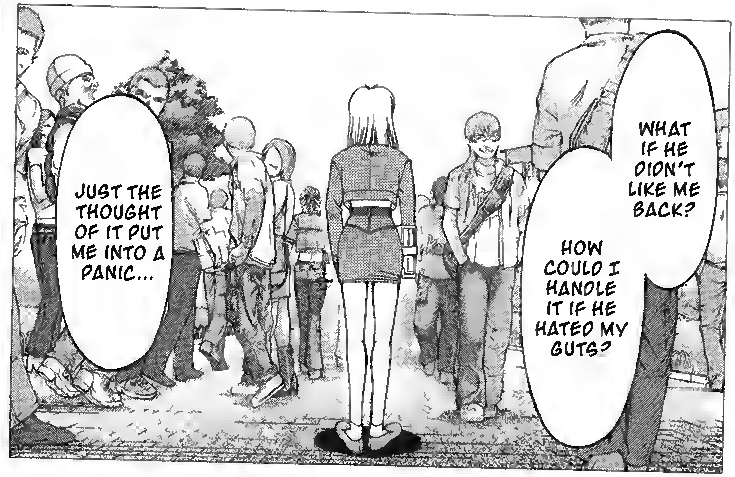

I MEAN, I REALLY, REALLY LIKED HIM.
ONLY..
THAT I HAD COME TO LIKE HIM A WHOLE LOT

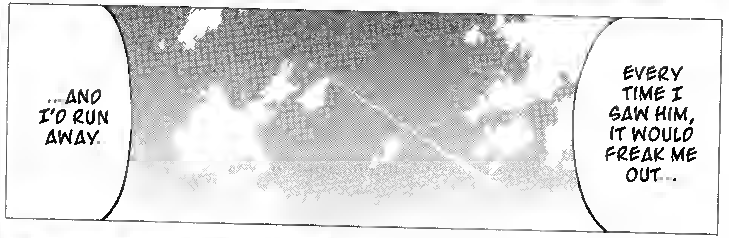
IT'S JUST HOW YOU ARE, TINA OUTGOING, GOOD-NATURED, EASY-GOING
YOU'VE ALWAYS SEEMED SO GENUINELY HAPPY
SCARED ? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

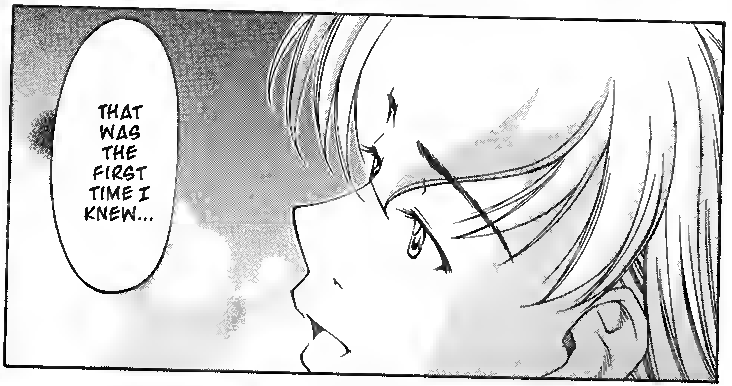
I'M NOT EVEN SURE I KNOW WHAT MY REAL FEELINGS ARE ANYMORE
HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S NOT ALL JUST AN ACT?

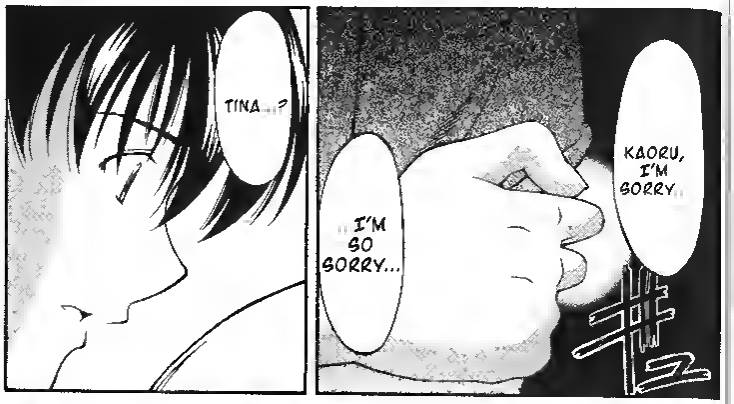
SHE'S A COWARD.
THE REAL ME, I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, IS AN UNFAIR PERSON.
BACK HERE, THOUGH, IN MY OLD SCHOOL, IT REMINDS ME OF WHO I AM.

...THAT FALLING IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE...
...IS THE SCARIEST THING IN THE WORLD

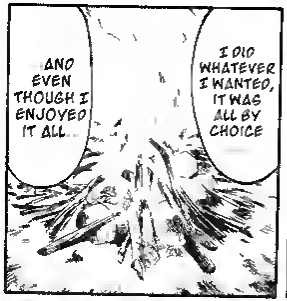

JUST THE THOUGHT OF IT PUT ME INTO A PANIC...
WHAT IF HE DION'T LIKE ME BACK?
HOW COULD I HANDLE IT IF HE HATED MY GUTS?


...AND I'D RUN AWAY.
EVERY TIME I SAW HIM, IT WOULD FREAK ME OUT...


THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME I KNEW...


TINA...?
KAORU, I'M SORRY...
I'M SO SORRY...

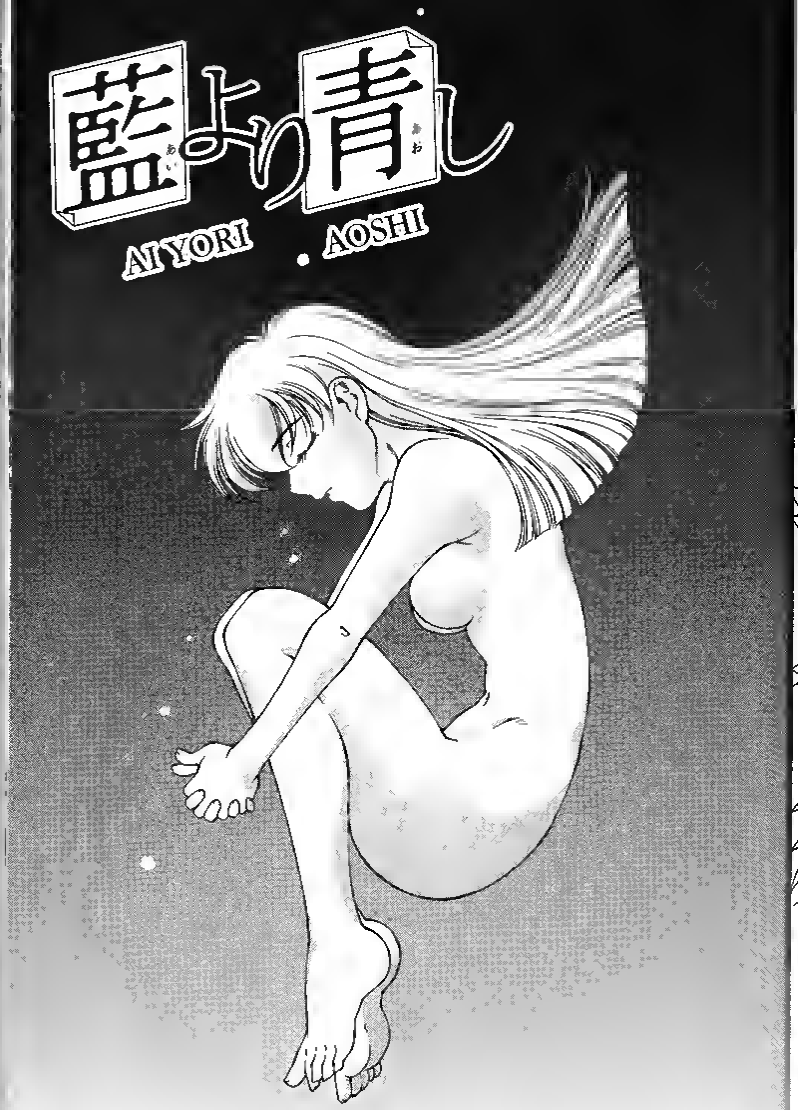
I SHOULDN'T EVER LOVE ANYONE, BUT
IT'S NO USE A WORTHLESS COWARD LIKE ME


I DID WHATEVER I WANTED, IT WAS ALL BY CHOICE
AND EVEN THOUGH I ENJOYED IT ALL...

I'D DISTRACT MYSELF WITH OTHER THINGS
ANY-THING TO GET AWAY
I'D FOCUS ALL MY THOUGHTS ON GOOD THINGS, SAFE THINGS
I TRIED TO MAKE MYSELF FORGET ALL ABOUT IT

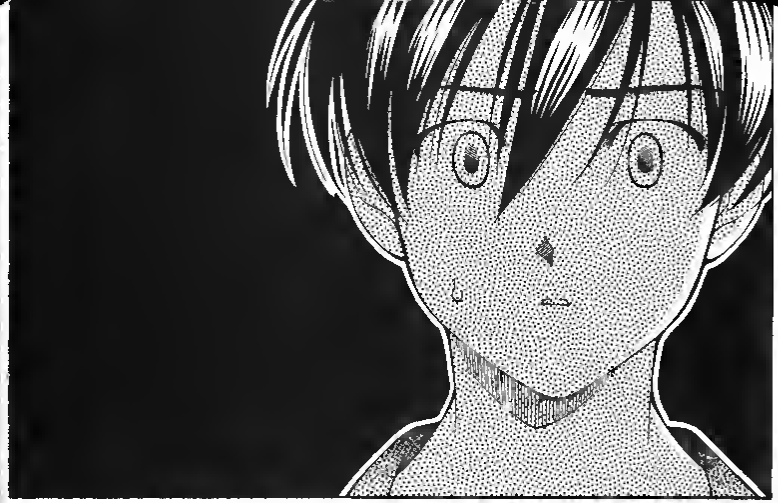
IT WASN'T ANY GOOD. I THOUGHT ABOUT THAT BOY EVERY DAY

I COULDN'T ESCAPE MY LOVE.
IN THE END, I COULDN'T RUN FROM HIM OR HOW I FELT



Chapter 113: Dokuhaku–Monologue

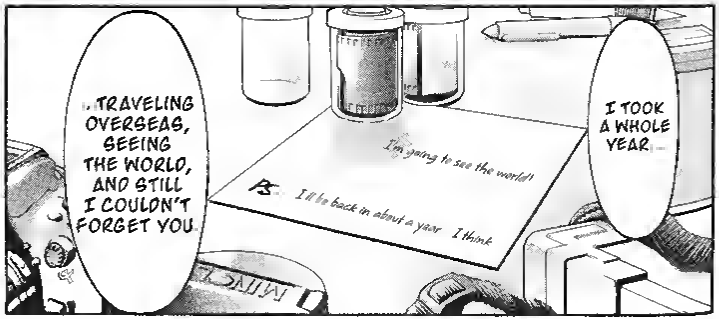
End of Chapter 112: Sojou–Retrospect



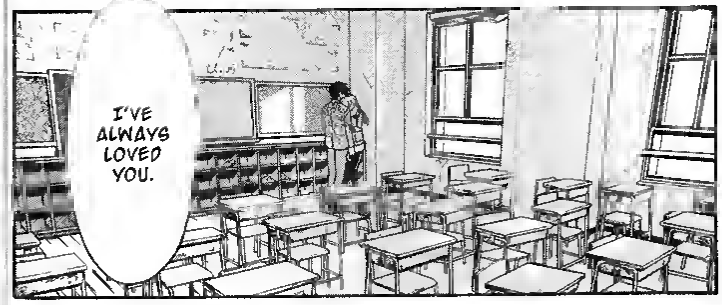
I HAD TO! I WAS SCARED OF HOW I FELT!
IS THAT WHY YOU DISAPPEARED AFTER THAT SEMESTER?

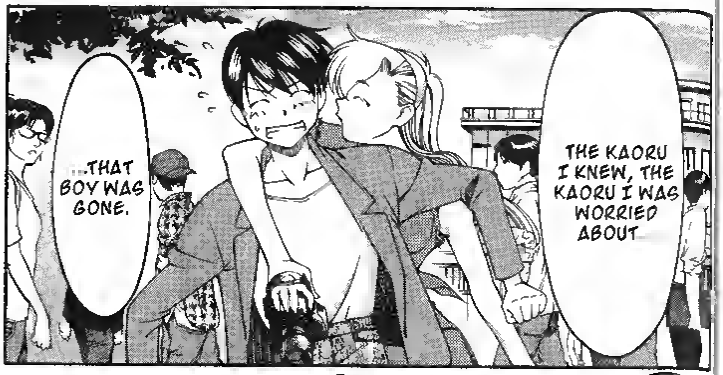
T-TINA... YOU...?

I'M SORRY... I KNOW THIS IS BAD TIMING.

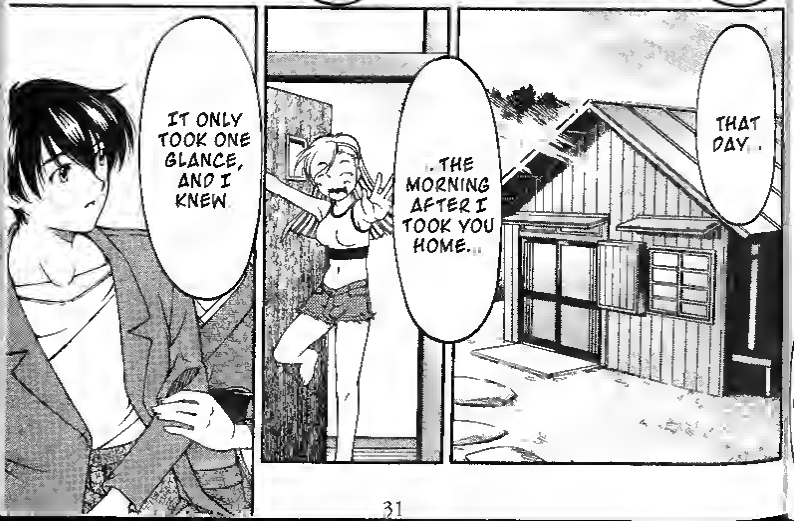

...TRAVELING OVERSEAS, SEEING THE WORLD, AND STILL I COULDN'T FORGET YOU.
I'm going to see the world!
I'll be back in about a year. I think...
I TOOK A WHOLE YEAR...

I LOVE YOU! IT'S NO USE PRETENDING I DON'T, KAORU!

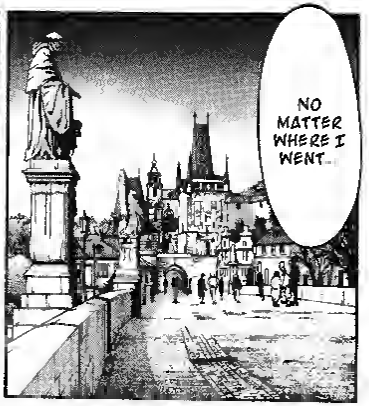

I'VE ALWAYS LOVED YOU.

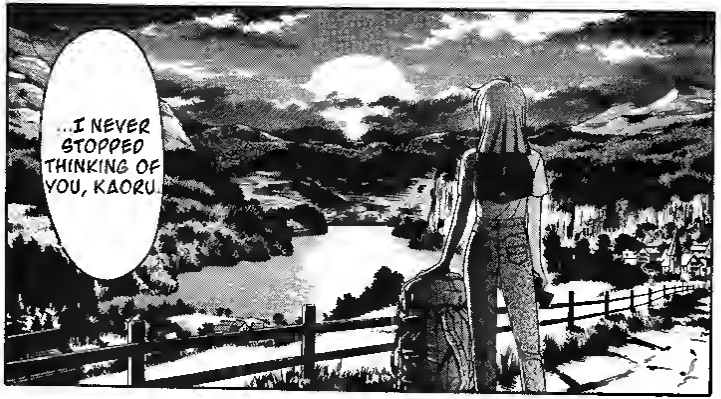

...THAT BOY WAS GONE.
THE KAORU I KNEW, THE KAORU I WAS WORRIED ABOUT...

I WONDERED WHAT HAD HAPPENED WHILE I WAS GONE.
I WAS SURPRISED BY THE CHANGE, KAORU.
...IT'S LIKE YOU BECAME MORE COMFORTABLE IN YOUR OWN SKIN OR SOMETHING.


IT ONLY TOOK ONE GLANCE, AND I KNEW
...THE MORNING AFTER I TOOK YOU HOME...
THAT DAY...

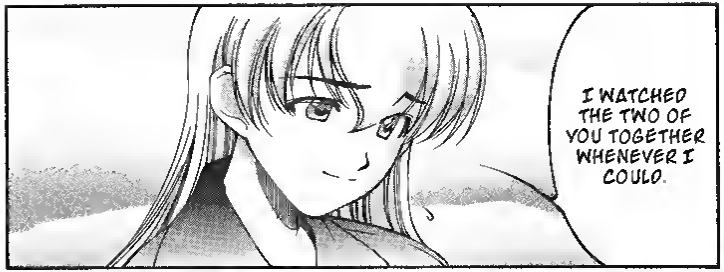
NO MATTER WHAT I DID...


NO MATTER WHERE I WENT...


...I NEVER STOPPED THINKING OF YOU, KAORU.

BUT, KAORU, YOU
I WANTED TO SEE YOU SO BADLY, I CAME BACK TO JAPAN
I REACHED A POINT WHERE I COULDN'T DENY MY FEELINGS ANY LONGER

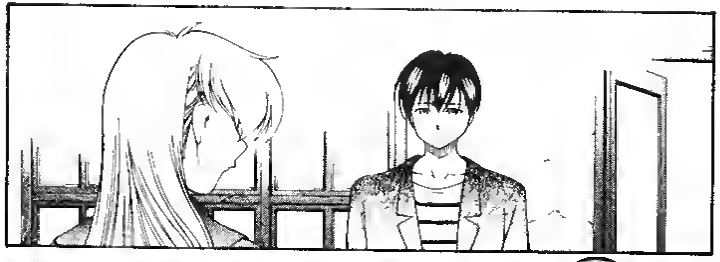
IT WAS HER.
AOI WAS YOUR SUPPORT, KAORU, DUTIFULLY PROPPING YOU UP.
TO BE HONEST...
...I WAS MORTIFIED.
IF I HAD TOLD YOU HOW I FELT ABOUT YOU RATHER THAN RUNNING AWAY...
...IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN ME STANDING BY YOUR SIDE INSTEAD OF HER

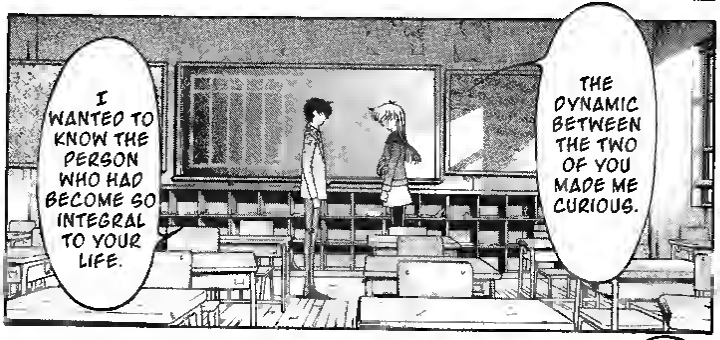

I WATCHED THE TWO OF YOU TOGETHER WHENEVER I COULD.

JEALOUSY CAN BE PAINFUL.

IT WASN'T ALWAYS EASY. IT USUALLY HURT.

...THE MORE I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO HATE HER
BUT THE MORE I GOT TO KNOW LANDLADY-SAN...

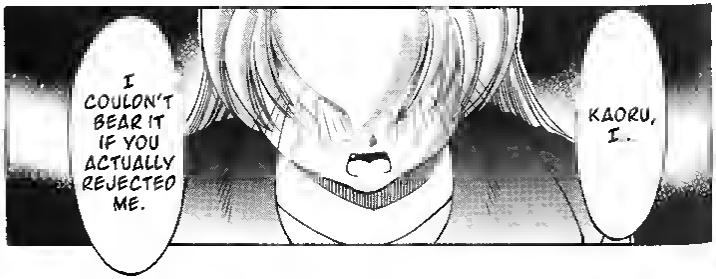



I WANTED TO KNOW THE PERSON WHO HAD BECOME SO INTEGRAL TO YOUR LIFE.
THE DYNAMIC BETWEEN THE TWO OF YOU MADE ME CURIOUS.

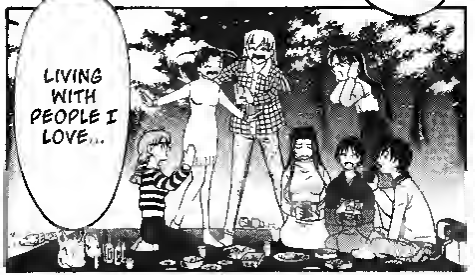
"WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS SHE?"
"THIS LANDLADY-SAN," I WONDERED...

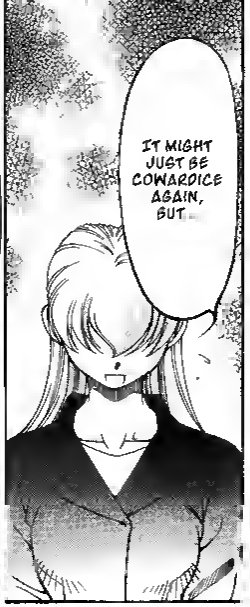
I--
STOP!!
TINA...
I--

STOP, KAORU... DON'T SAY ANYTHING.


I COULDN'T BEAR IT IF YOU ACTUALLY REJECTED ME.
KAORU, I..

YOU KNOW, THINKING BACK ON IT NOW, WE ALL HAD FUN TOGETHER.


LIVING WITH PEOPLE I LOVE...


IT MIGHT JUST BE COWARDICE AGAIN, BUT...

BEING ABLE TO SPEND TIME WITH MY BELOVED KAORU AND HIS GIRL...

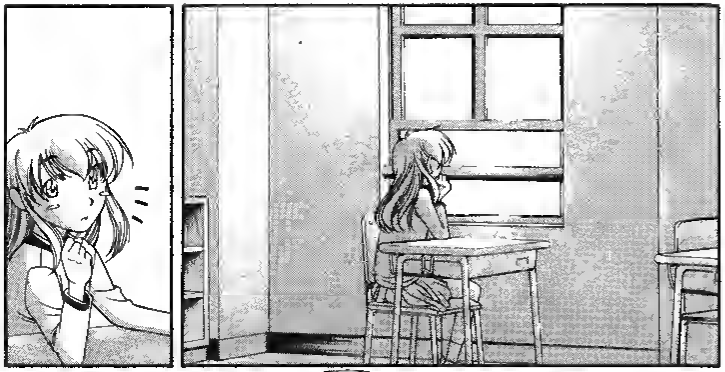
NEVER EVER...
...STOP LOVING LANDLADY-SAN.

I FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU ON MY OWN...
...AND I'LL GIVE UP ON YOU ON MY OWN. DON'T YOU WORRY.
I HAVE JUST ONE FAVOR TO ASK.
KAORU

A FAVOR FOR THE GIRL WHO CAN NEVER BE YOUR GIRLFRIEND.

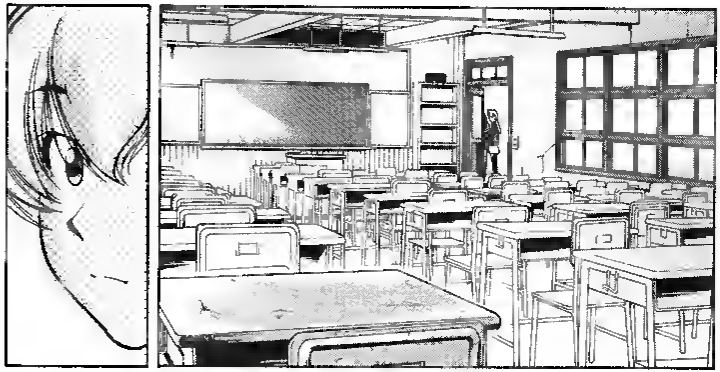
A FAVOR FOR THE GIRL WHO CAN NEVER BE YOUR GIRLFRIEND.

NO MORE PRETENDING TO BE BOYFRIEND AND GIRLFRIEND! THAT GAME'S OVER!!
FORGET IT!!
STARTING THIS SECOND, WE'RE BACK TO BEING...
..NORMAL KAORU AND NORMAL ME!
..TINA?
whisper
THANK YOU, KAORU



LET'S GO BACK, KAORU OUR FRIENDS ARE WAITING
OKAY.

...SURE.



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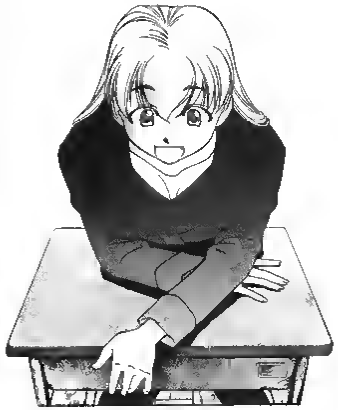
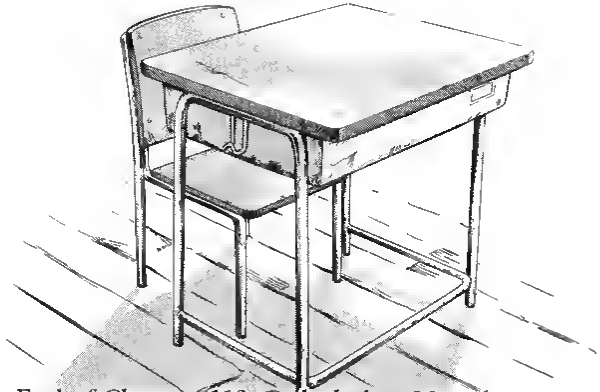
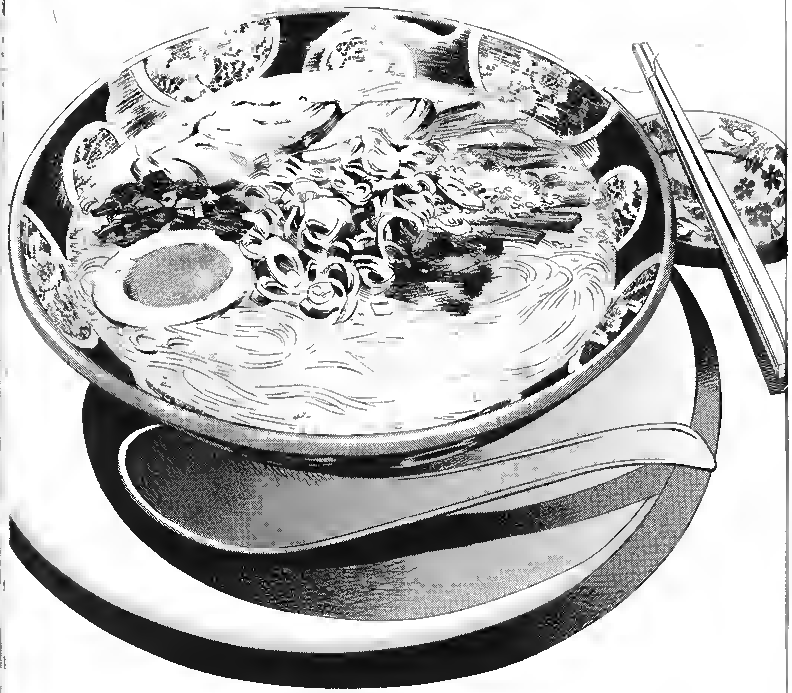
AI YORI AOSHI

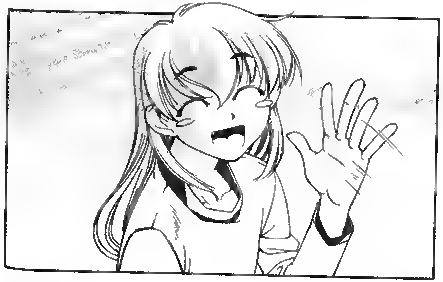


GOODBYE--



End of Chapter 113: Dokuhaku—Monologue





Chapter 114: Chi'in–Dear Friend

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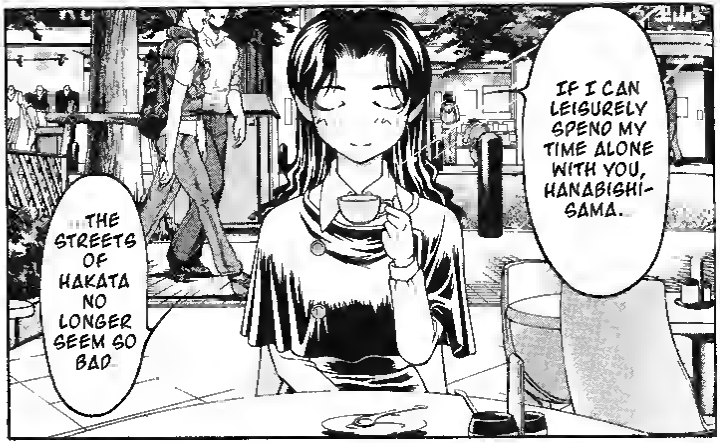
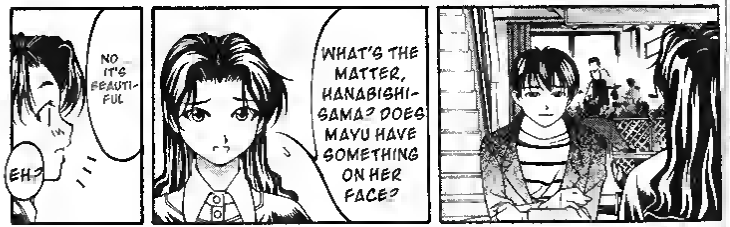
AI YORI AOSHI

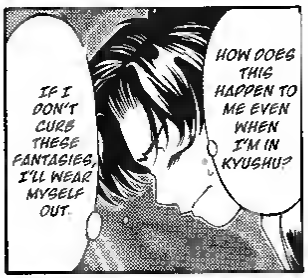

IF I CAN LEISURELY SPEND MY TIME ALONE WITH YOU, HANABISHI-SAMA.
THE STREETS OF HAKATA NO LONGER SEEM SO BAD

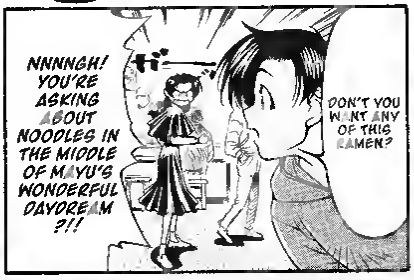

NO IT'S BEAUTIFUL
EH?
WHAT'S THE MATTER, HANABISHI-SAMA? DOES MAYU HAVE SOMETHING ON HER FACE?

MAYU-CHAN.
OH, NO, HANABISHI-SAMA NO MATTER HOW TRUE IT IS, SUCH TALK STILL EMBARRASSES MAYU
HOW IS IT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO BE SO PRETTY, MAYU-CHAN?

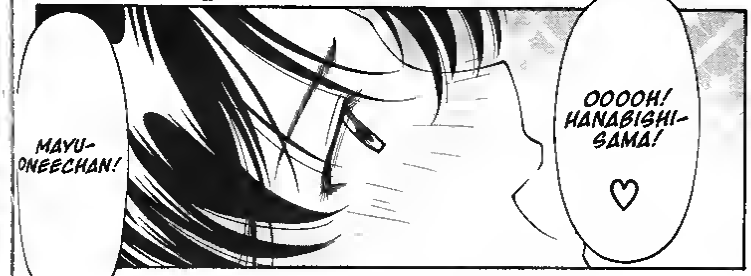
MAYU-ONEECHAN!!
NOT THERE, HANABISHI-SAMA!

AH! HANABISHI-SAMA, YOU MUSTN'T! PEOPLE WILL SEE...
--NEE-CHAN?

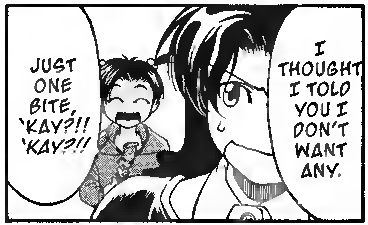

HOW DOES THIS HAPPEN TO ME EVEN WHEN I'M IN KYUSHU?
IF I DON'T CURB THESE FANTASIES, I'LL WEAR MYSELF OUT.

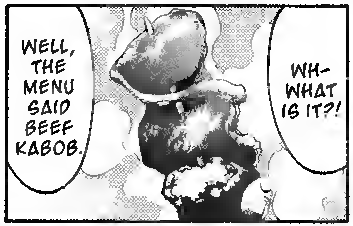

DON'T YOU WANT ANY OF THIS RAMEN?
NNNNGH! YOU'RE ASKING ABOUT NOODLES IN THE MIDDLE OF MAYU'S WONDERFUL DAYDREAM ?!!

EVEN SO...
I WONDER WHAT HANABISHI-SAMA IS DOING RIGHT NOW...?


OOOOH! HANABISHI-SAMA!
♡
MAYU-ONEECHAN!

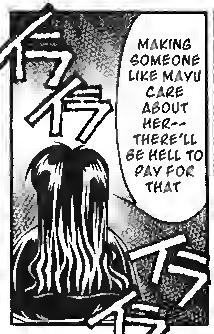
HERE, MAYU-ONEECHAN!


I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU I DON'T WANT ANY.
JUST ONE BITE, 'KAY?!! 'KAY?!!


WH-WHAT IS IT?!
WELL, THE MENU SAID BEEF KABOB.

CHIKA-CHAN, DON'T YOU THINK WE'RE BEING A NUISANCE?
I DUNNO SHE'S KIND OF HARD TO TAG ALONG WITH
EH?! REALLY?

REALLY! WHEN IT COMES TO THAT COWARDLY LION...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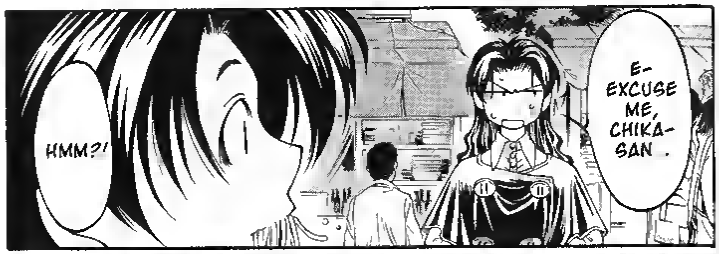
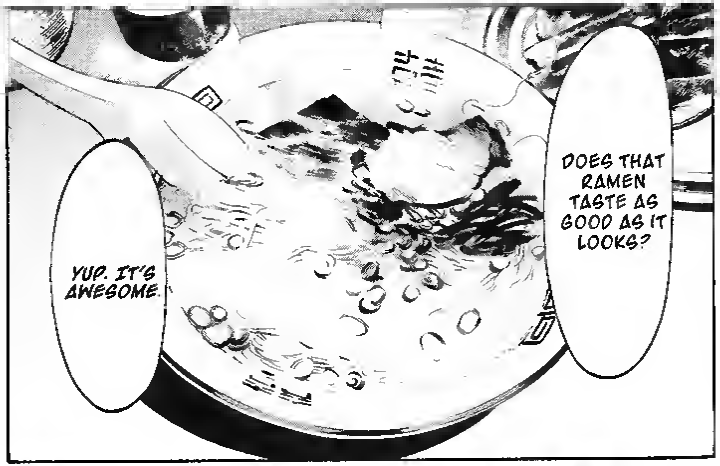
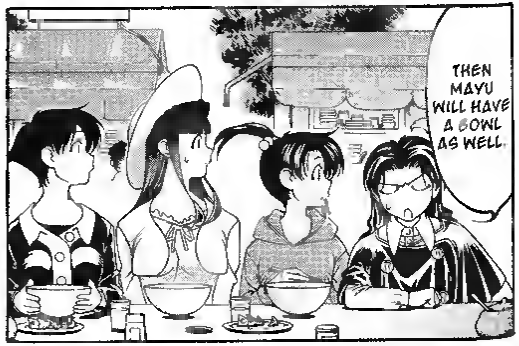
MAKING SOMEONE LIKE MAYU CARE ABOUT HER-- THERE'LL BE HELL TO PAY FOR THAT
イライラ

SHE CAN'T DO ANYTHING WITHOUT MAKING A BIG PRODUCTION OF IT


E-EXCUSE ME, CHIKA-SAN.
HMM?!


DOES THAT RAMEN TASTE AS GOOD AS IT LOOKS?
YUP. IT'S AWESOME.

I-IT'S NOT LIKE YOU LURED ME INTO EATING IT, JUST SO YOU KNOW.


THEN MAYU WILL HAVE A BOWL AS WELL.

DON'T SAY THAT! MAYU-ONEECHAN IS NICE.
SHE'S A LOT OF FUN, TOO.

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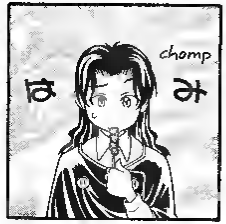
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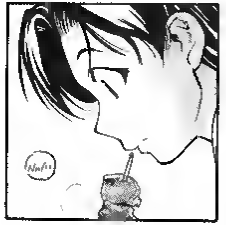
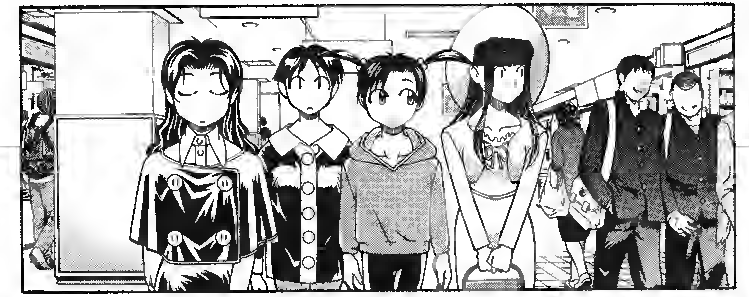
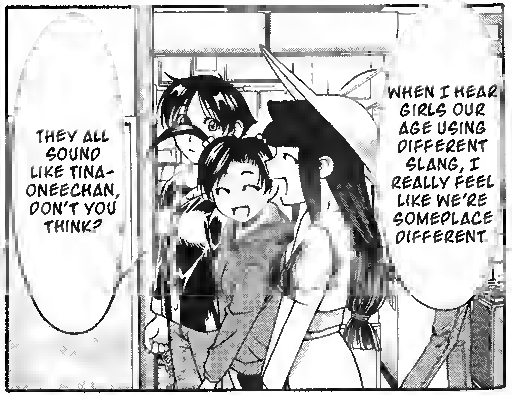


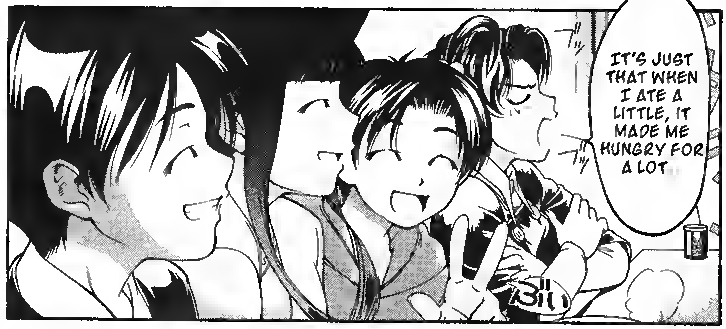
YEAH? I CAN'T BELIEVE I BAILED ON IT.

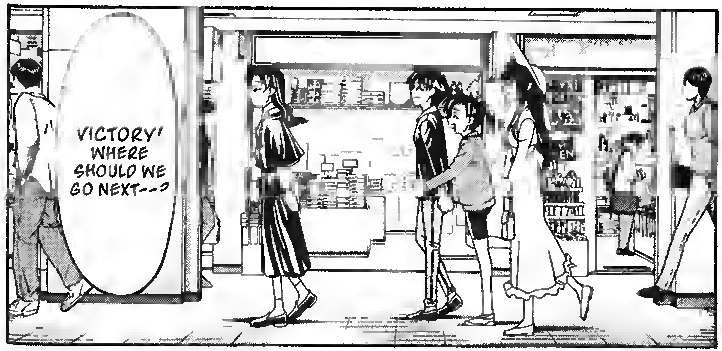
UH-HUH. THAT SHOW WAS TOTALLY BANANAS



AH! SPEAKING OF DIF-FERENT PLACES


THEY ALL SOUND LIKE TINA-ONEECHAN, DON'T YOU THINK?
WHEN I HEAR GIRLS OUR AGE USING DIFFERENT SLANG, I REALLY FEEL LIKE WE'RE SOMEPLACE DIFFERENT

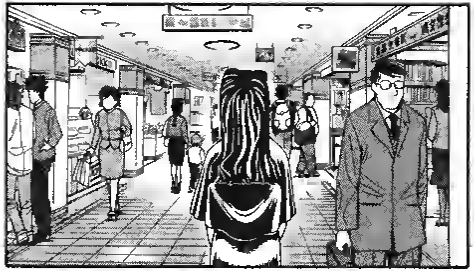

IT'S JUST THAT WHEN I ATE A LITTLE, IT MADE ME HUNGRY FOR A LOT


VICTORY! WHERE SHOULD WE GO NEXT--?

I DIDN'T MAKE ANY FRIENDS IN ENGLAND, SO I DON'T KNOW.
BUT THEN, THAT'S NO DIFFERENT THAN JAPAN, IS IT?

YOU SPENT TIME STUDYING IN ENGLAND, DIDN'T YOU, MAYU-ONEECHAN?

B-BUT YOU AND TINA-ONEECHAN ARE REALLY GOOD FRIENDS, RIGHT?!!

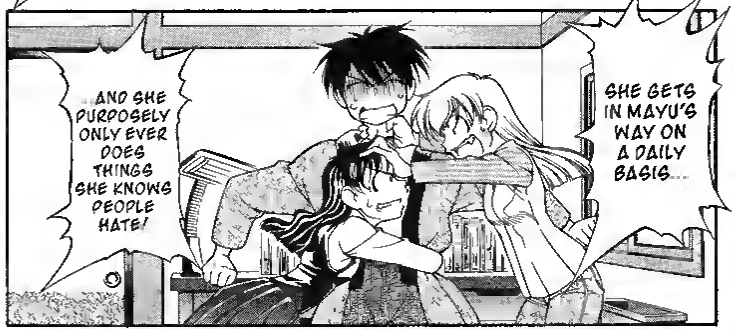


WHAT ARE KIDS LIKE OVER THERE? ARE THEY WEIRD?
REALLY?! YOU'VE LIVED ABROAD?!

HMM, WERE THEY...?

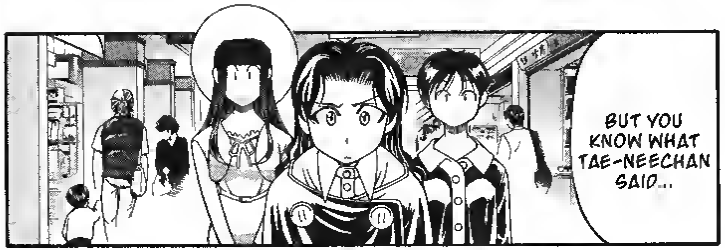
THEN HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT MAYU AND THAT AMAZON FREAK ARE GOOD FRIENDS?!

SHE'S CONSISTENTLY ILL-MANNERED, NOISY, AND THOUGHTLESS!

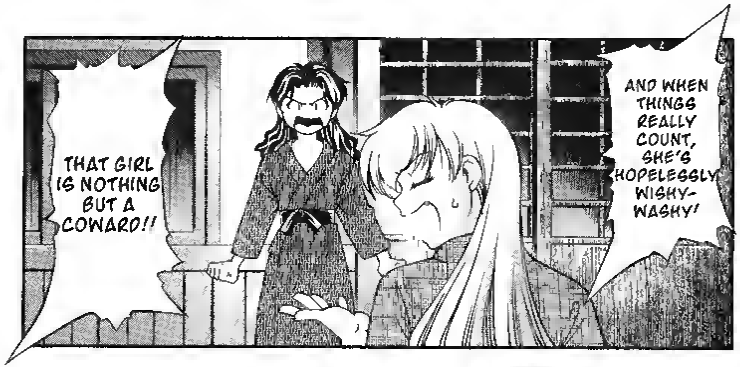

...AND SHE PURPOSELY ONLY EVER DOES THINGS SHE KNOWS PEOPLE HATE!
SHE GETS IN MAYU'S WAY ON A DAILY BASIS...

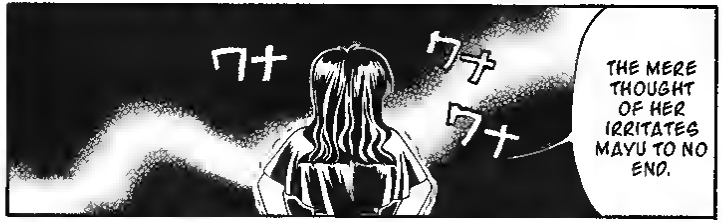
WHAT?!

CHIKA-SAN...
YOU'VE SEEN HOW MAYU GETS ALONG WITH THAT WOMAN... HAVEN'T YOU!?
Y-YEAH...?


BUT YOU KNOW WHAT TAE-NEECHAN SAID...

THAT OUR BEST FRIENDS ARE THE ONES WHO KNOW OUR FAULTS BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE!


THAT GIRL IS NOTHING BUT A COWARD!!
AND WHEN THINGS REALLY COUNT, SHE'S HOPELESSLY WISHY-WASHY!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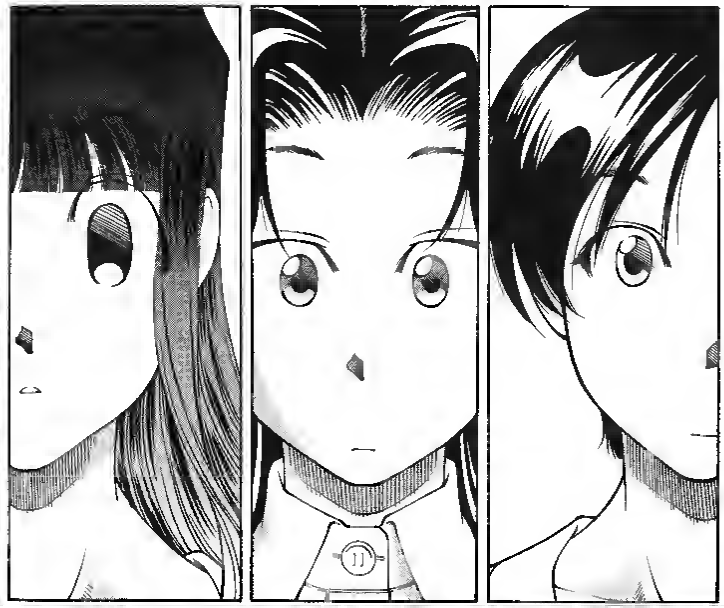
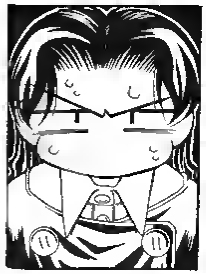
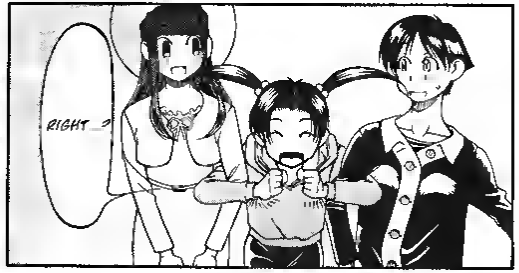
THE MERE THOUGHT OF HER IRRITATES MAYU TO NO END.

JUST SO WE'RE CLEAR, SHE WILL STATE IT OUTRIGHT: MAYU ABSOLUTELY HATES TINA-SAN!!

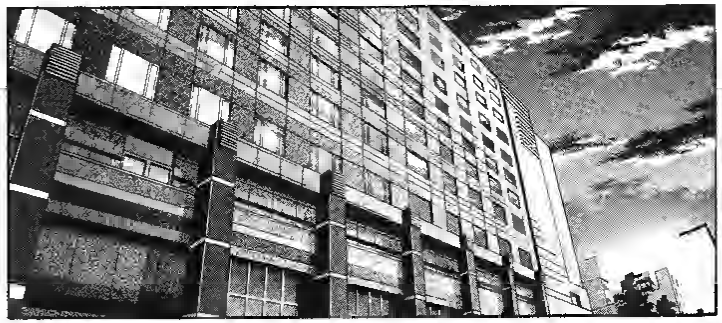


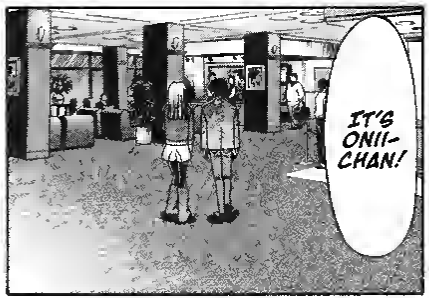
ふ!..
THE ONLY REASON YOU KNOW ALL OF THOSE THINGS ABOUT TINA-ONEECHAN IS BECAUSE YOU CARE SO MUCH ABOUT HER, MAYU-ONEECHAN

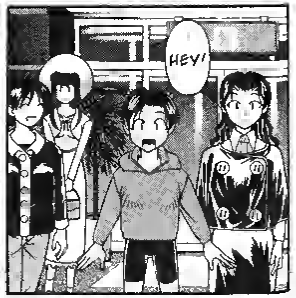



RIGHT~♪

...ABSOLUTELY WRONG!!
YOU ARE ...




IT'S ONII-CHAN!


HEY!

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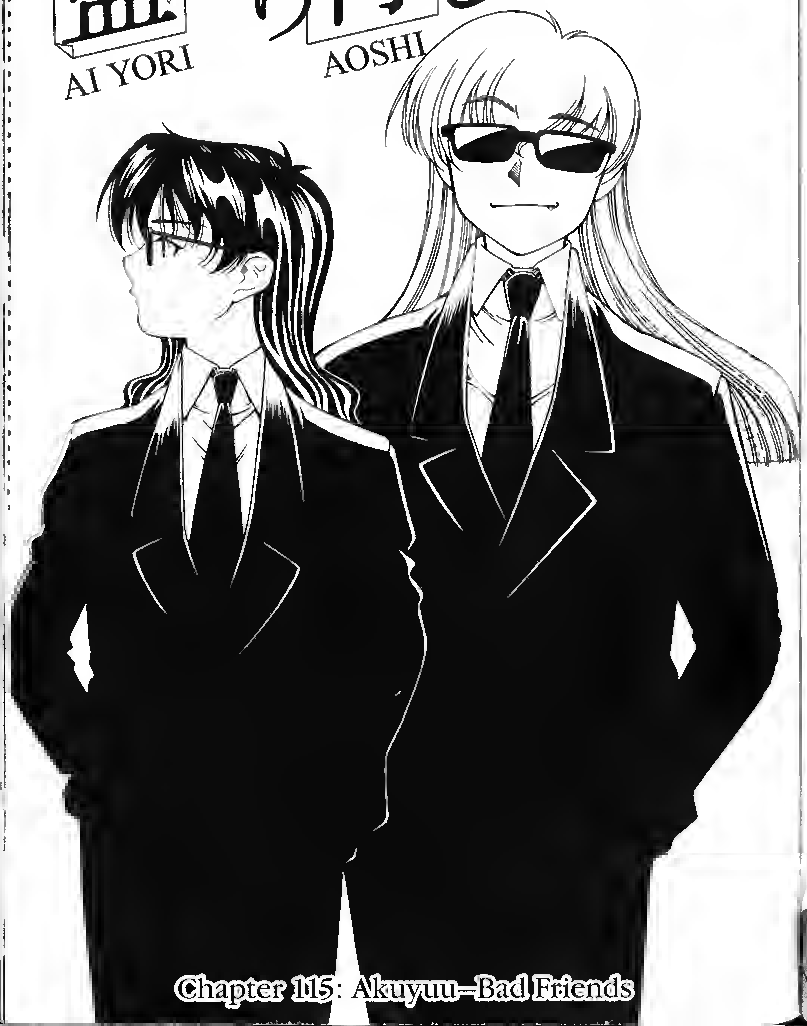
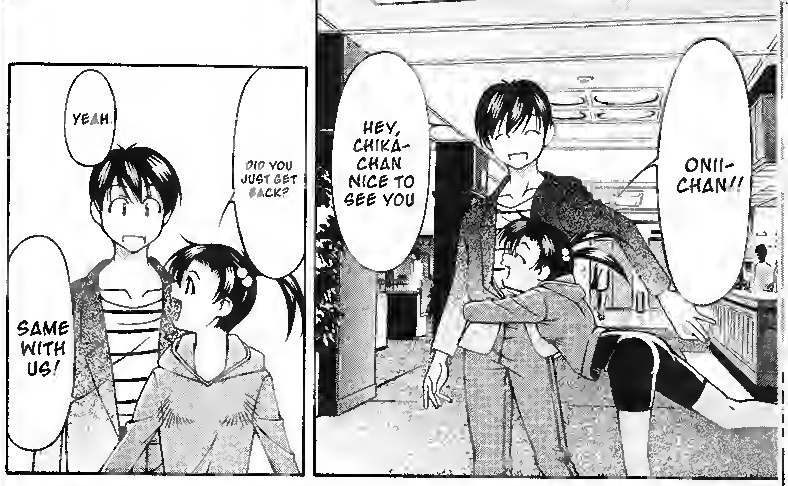
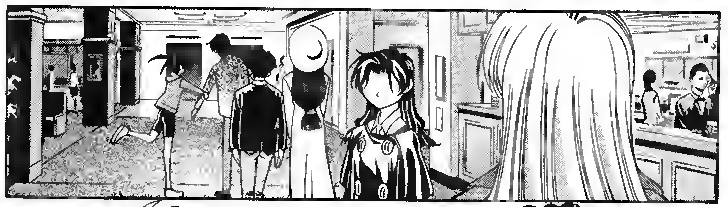
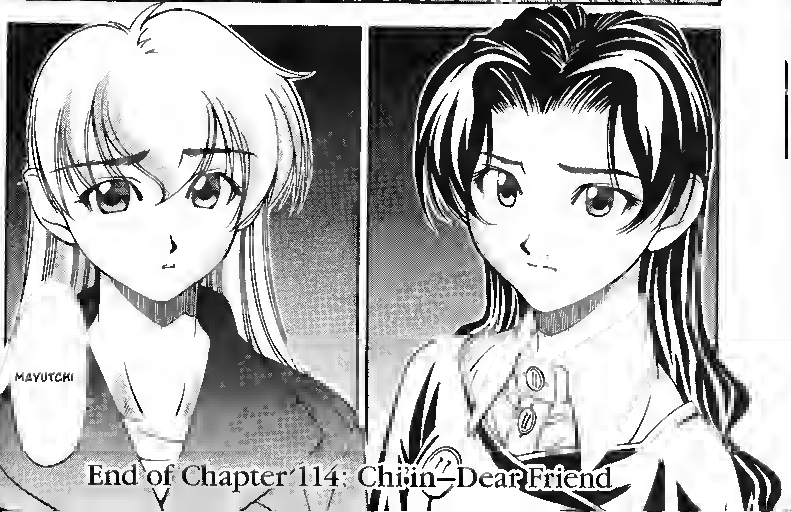
AI YORI AOSHI



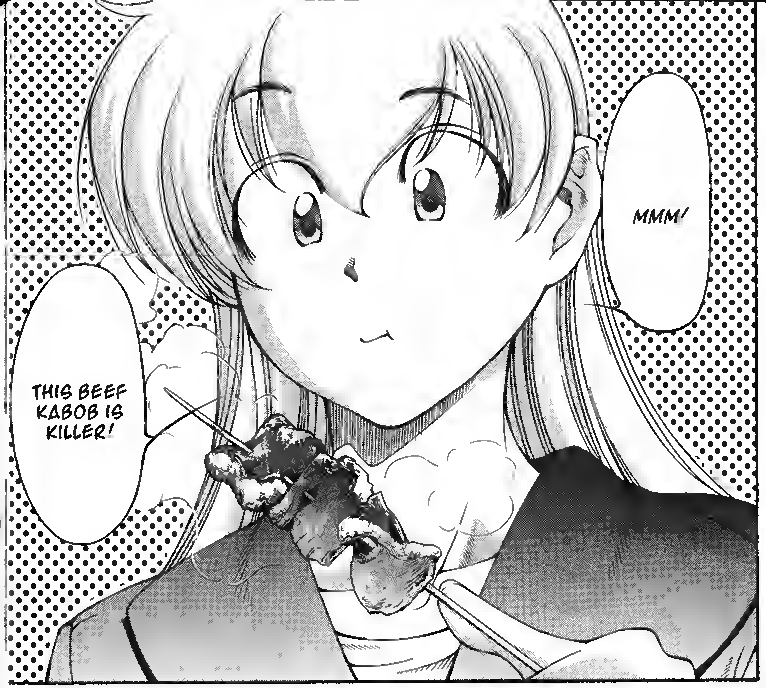
Chapter 115: Akuyuu—Bad Friends



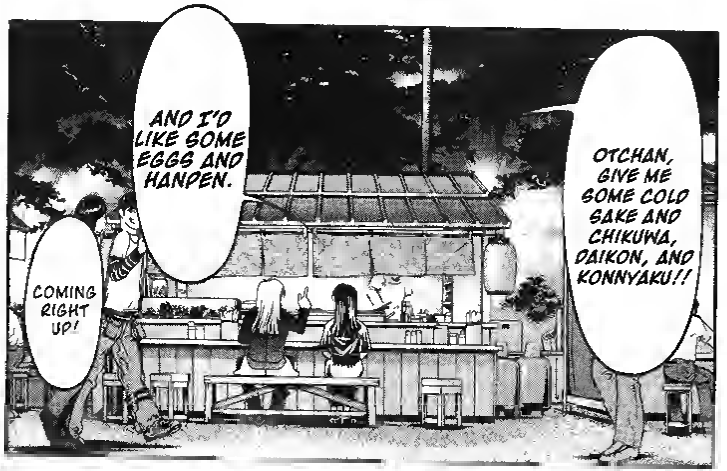




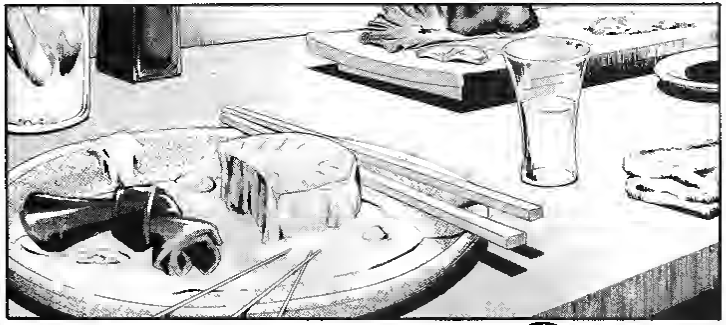
End of Chapter 114: Chūin—Dear Friend


MMM!
THIS BEEF KABOB IS KILLER!

WHERE DID YOU HEAR ABOUT SUCH A GREAT PLACE, MAYUTCHI? I'M SURPRISED
THAT'LL TEACH YOU TO UNDERESTIMATE MAYU'S GOURMET INFORMATION NETWORK!


OTCHAN, GIVE ME SOME COLD SAKE AND CHIKUWA, DAIKON, AND KONNYAKU!!
AND I'D LIKE SOME EGGS AND HANPEN.
COMING RIGHT UP!

SHUT UP!
ICK! YOU'RE DROWNING IT WITH THAT MUSTARD!
URHHHH! YOU'RE SUCH A BEAT!



...SO.

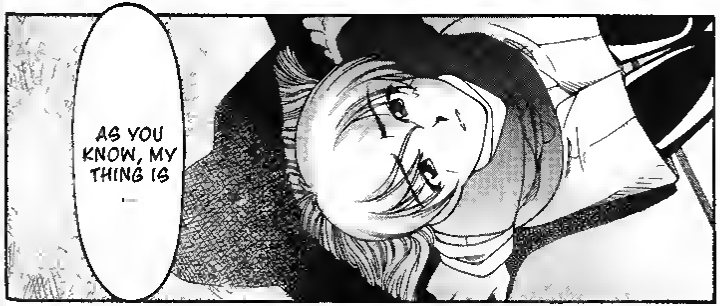
DID YOU TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS?

I CAME TO JAPAN TO MAKE MEMORIES. AND MY ENTIRE TRIP WAS DEVOTED TO THAT

IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU, I'D NEVER HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TELL KAORU HOW I FEEL.
THANK YOU, MAYUTCHI

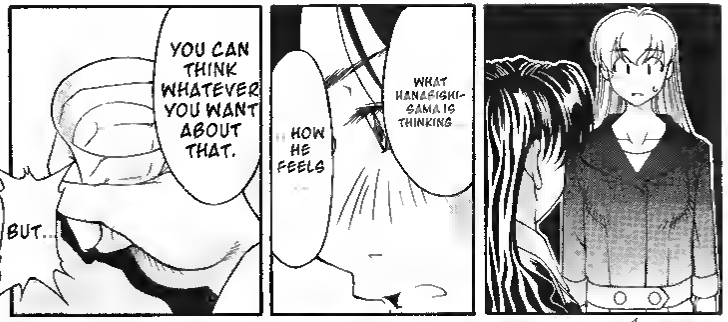
I DID...

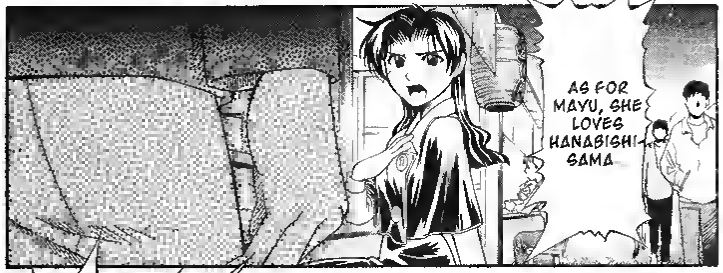
IF YOU'RE SO GRATEFUL, YOU'D THINK I WOULDN'T HAVE TO ASK!


AS YOU KNOW, MY THING IS

AND WHAT ABOUT YOU, MAYUTCHI ...?!

Y'KNOW, IT'S THESE WEAK, SPINELESS, PESSIMISTIC QUALITIES OF YOURS...
...THAT MAKE ME SO MAD AT YOU.
IT'S NOT LIKE I CAN HELP IT!
BECAUSE KAORU...
KAORU...

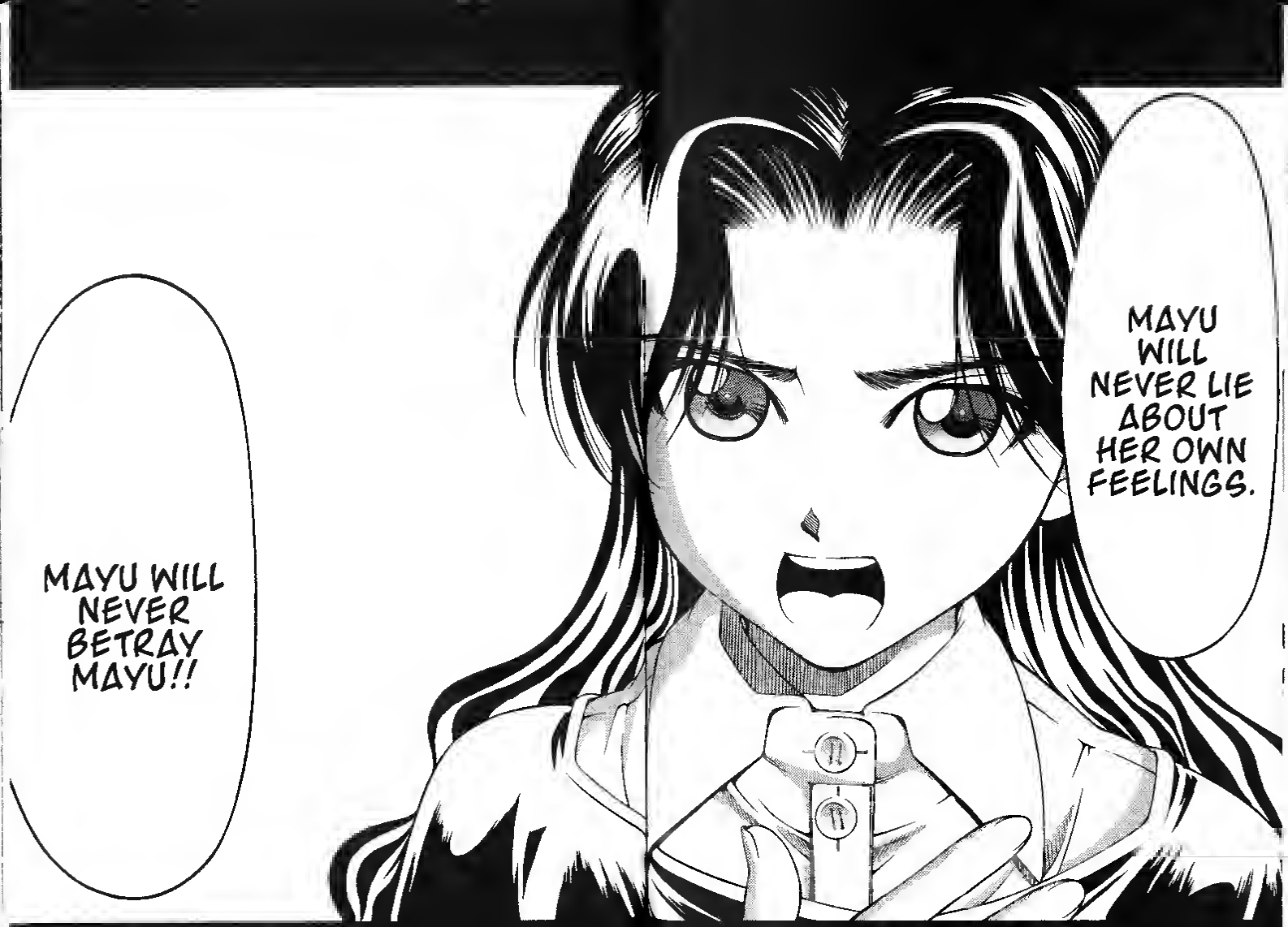

YOU CAN THINK WHATEVER YOU WANT ABOUT THAT.
BUT...
HOW HE FEELS...
WHAT HANABISHI-SAMA IS THINKING...

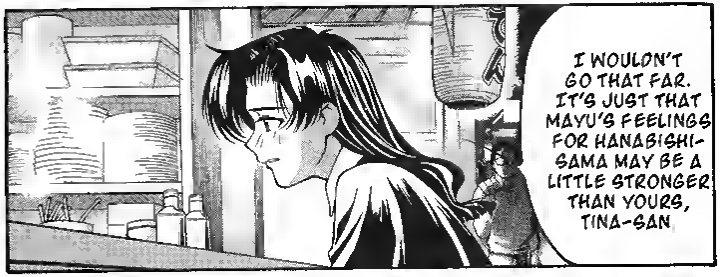

AS FOR MAYU, SHE LOVES HANABISHI-SAMA

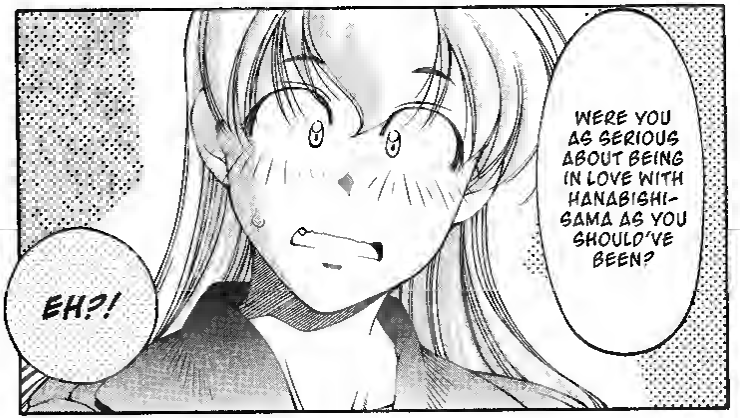
...AND IT'S UP TO HER TO DO WHAT SHE WANTS WITH THAT LOVE!!

IT'S UP TO HANABISHI-SAMA TO DECIDE WHO IT IS HE WANTS TO LOVE.

IT'S NOT UP TO YOU TO TELL ANYONE ELSE HOW IT'S GOING TO GO!

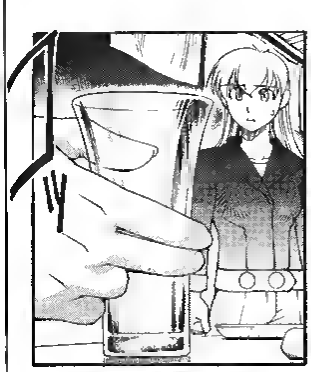

MAYU WILL NEVER BETRAY MAYU!!
MAYU WILL NEVER LIE ABOUT HER OWN FEELINGS.


I WOULDN'T GO THAT FAR. IT'S JUST THAT MAYU'S FEELINGS FOR HANABISHI-SAMA MAY BE A LITTLE STRONGER THAN YOURS, TINA-SAN.


WERE YOU AS SERIOUS ABOUT BEING IN LOVE WITH HANABISHI-SAMA AS YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN?
EH?!

HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY THIS IS WHY I HATE YOU?!

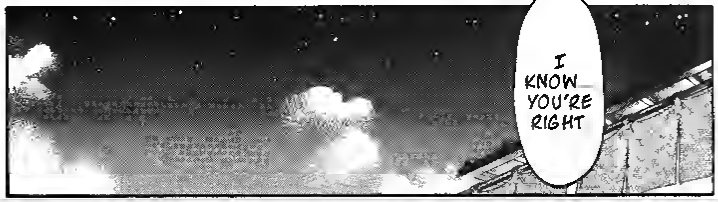
W-WELL, THE WORD "LOVE"... I GUESS IT MIGHT BE THE WAY TO SAY IT, BUT... WELL... BUT...



YOU'RE AMAZING.

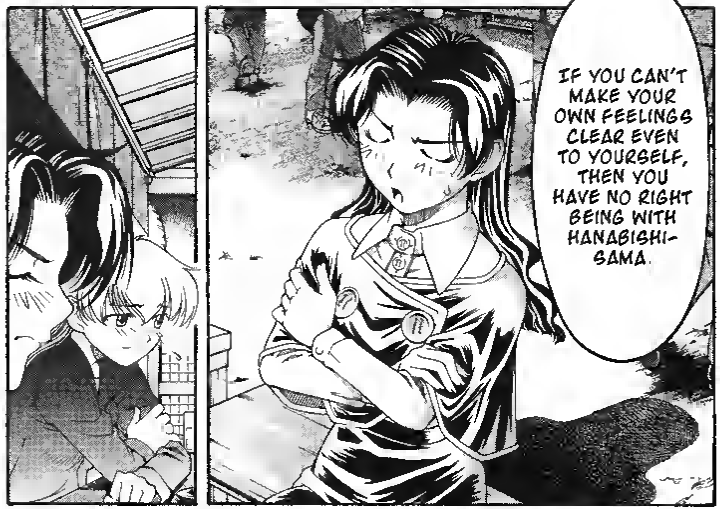
WOW, MAYUTCHI...

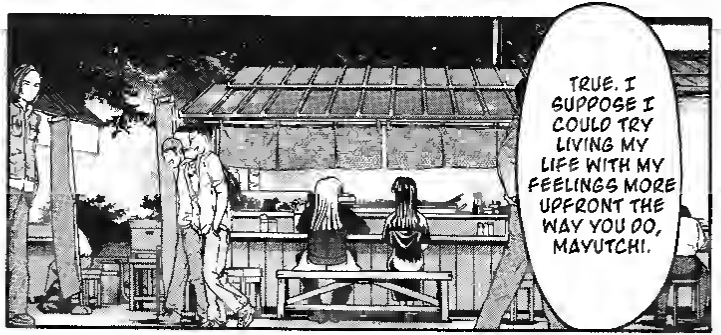
OF COURSE! HOW COULD HE NOT?!
...WOULD HE BE WILLING TO CATCH ANY OF IT?


I KNOW... YOU'RE RIGHT

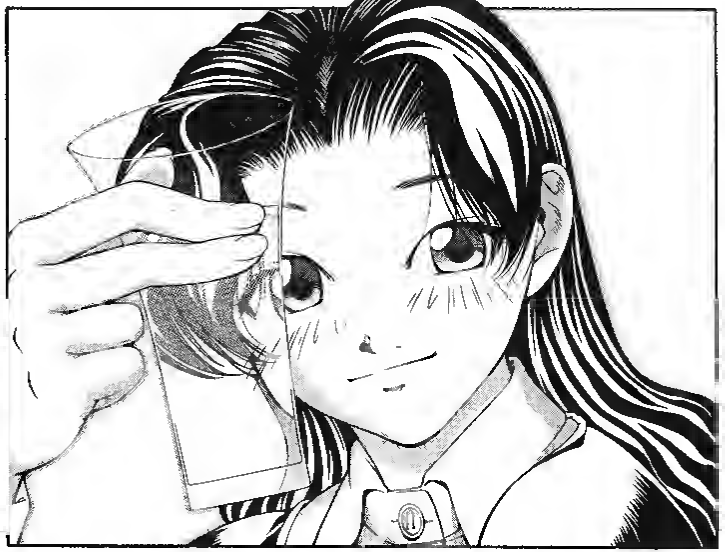
NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN, TINA-SAN

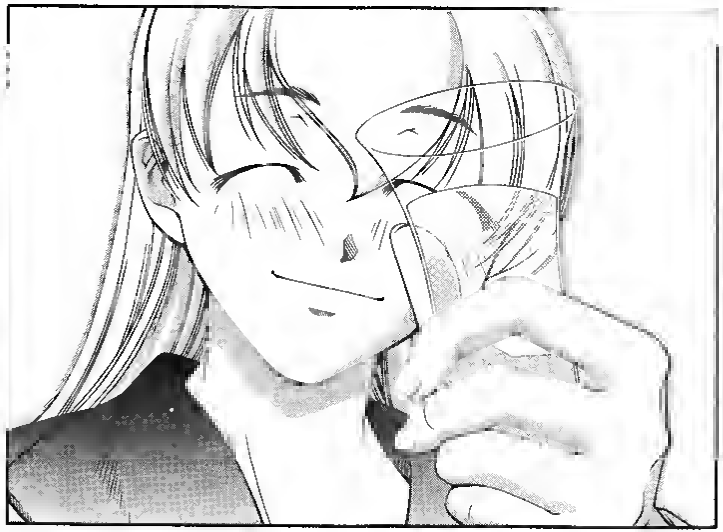
KAORU IS TOO NICE TO DROP A GIRL COLD LIKE THAT.


IF YOU CAN'T MAKE YOUR OWN FEELINGS CLEAR EVEN TO YOURSELF, THEN YOU HAVE NO RIGHT BEING WITH HANABISHI-SAMA.


TRUE. I SUPPOSE I COULD TRY LIVING MY LIFE WITH MY FEELINGS MORE UPFRONT THE WAY YOU DO, MAYUTCHI.

BUT...
IF I WERE TO THROW EVERYTHING I'VE EVER THOUGHT AND FELT AT KAORU...





I MEAN HANABISHI-SAMA HAS A BIG HEART, AND HE CAN'T HELP USING IT TO LOVE.

藍より青し

AI YORI AOSHI

Chapter 16

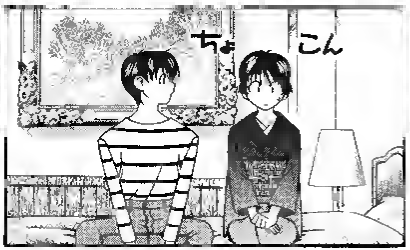
Shoki Hopes

End of Chapter 115: Akuyuu—Bad Friends

OH, HEY! I'M BACK, AOI-CHAN
I WAS JUST ABOUT TO STOP BY YOUR ROOM
KAORU-SAMA!
KAORU-SAMA...?
WH-WHAA--?!
512

O-OKAY...

UH, UM, KAORU-SAMA?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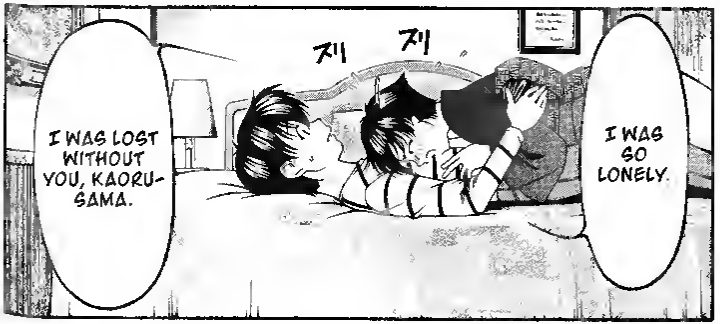
WOULD YOU MIND GOING SOMEWHERE WITH ME?

IF IT'S ALL RIGHT...

I WAS SO LONELY, KAORU-SAMA!


I WAS LOST WITHOUT YOU, KAORU-SAMA.
I WAS SO LONELY.

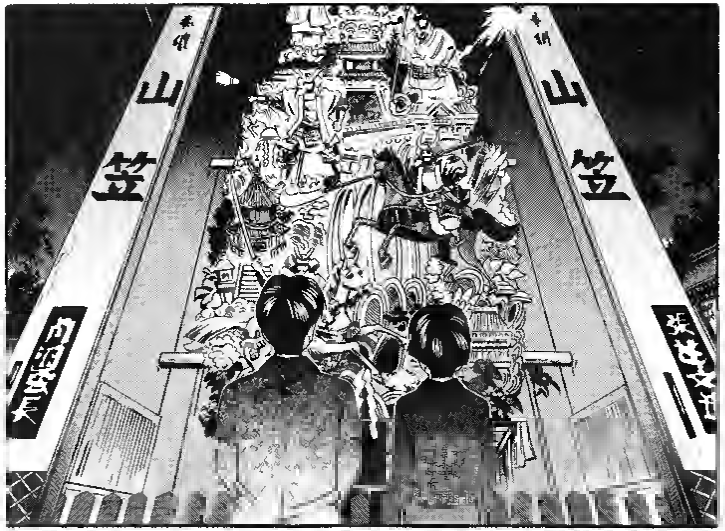
KAORU-SAMAAA!
Uoh

THIS WAY, KAORU-SAMA!

Y-YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.

WE HAVE TO HURRY. OUR ALONE TIME IS SO RARE, WE DON'T WANT TO WASTE IT.

AA A...


山笠
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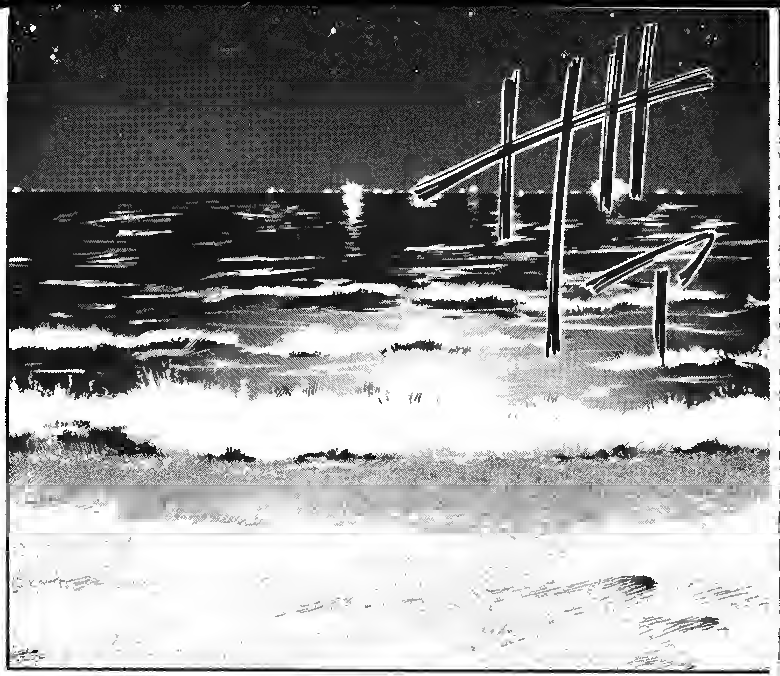
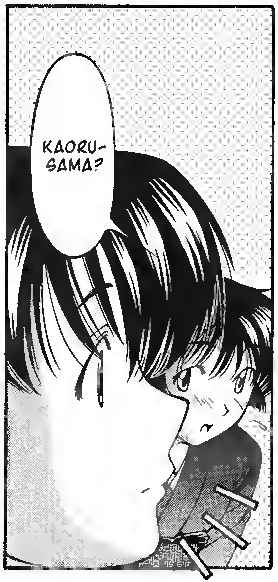
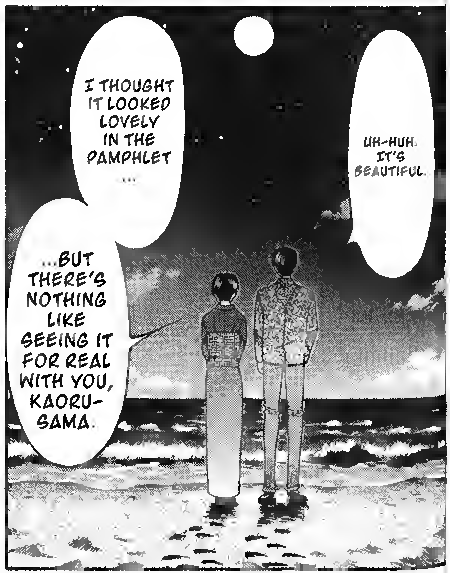
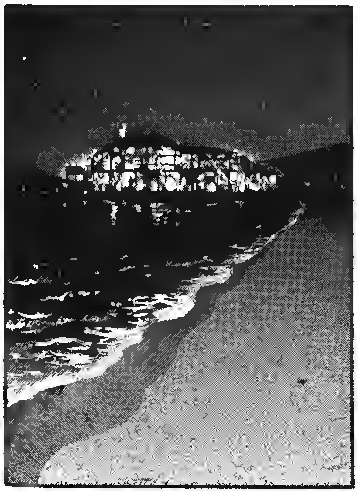
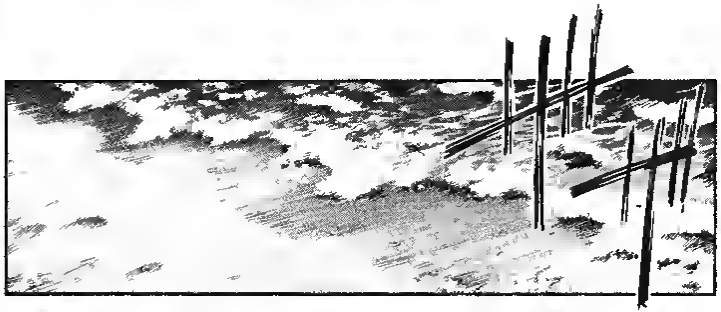
ISN'T IT ALL SO PRETTY?



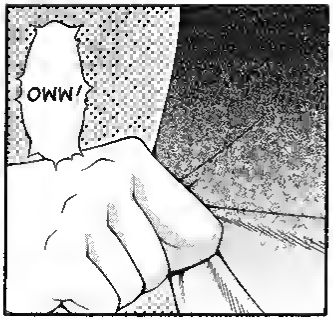

KAORU-SAMA?


I THOUGHT IT LOOKED LOVELY IN THE PAMPHLET ...
UH-HUH. IT'S BEAUTIFUL.
...BUT THERE'S NOTHING LIKE SEEING IT FOR REAL WITH YOU, KAORU-SAMA.

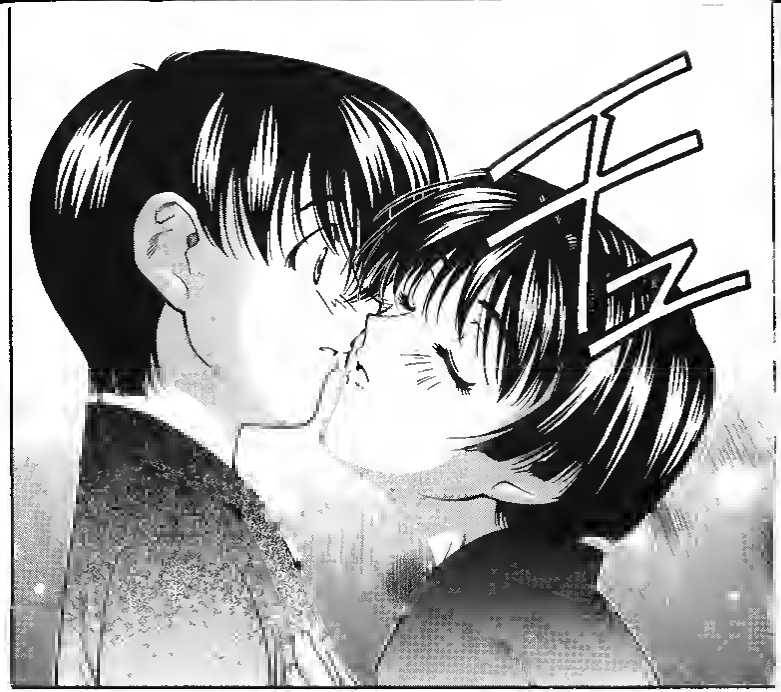




DID YOU HAVE FUN WITH TINA-SAN TODAY?


OWW!

ERR, UM...Y-YEAH



BEING ON THE BEACH ALL BY OURSELVES MADE ME A LITTLE BOLD, I GUESS.
DID I SURPRISE YOU?

AOI-CHAN

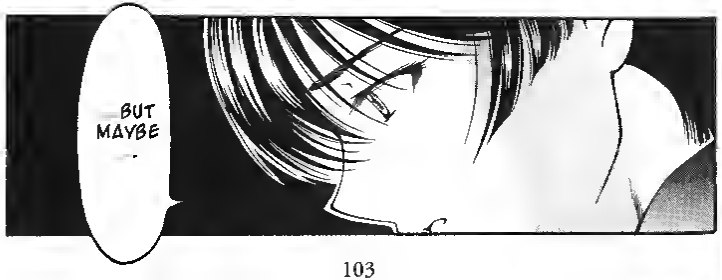
ATTRACTIVE QUALITIES THAT I DON'T HAVE
BECAUSE TINA-SAN HAS SO MANY...

むっ
YOU DID HAVE FUN, DIDN'T YOU ...?

RIGHT NOW, AOI MAY BE WITH KAORU-SAMA ON A ROMANTIC BEACH...
I KNOW SHE'S IMPORTANT TO YOU, KAORU-SAMA

I MAY NOT LOOK LIKE IT, BUT I GET PRETTY JEALOUS.

KAORU-SAMA, SOMETIMES YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND AOI AT ALL.


BUT MAYBE...

I'VE BEEN ANXIOUSLY WAITING FOR YOU ALL DAY LONG.

...TINA-SAN INSTEAD OF AOI...
IF KAORU-SAMA HAD CHOSEN
I THINK ABOUT THAT SOME-TIMES
AOI WOULD ...
AOI-CHAN

IT COULD JUST AS EASILY BE TINA-SAN WHO WAS BY YOUR SIDE
IF I HAD TOLD YOU HOW I FELT ABOUT YOU RATHER THAN RUNNING AWAY
...IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN ME STANDING BY YOUR SIDE INSTEAD OF HER

KAORU-SAMA...

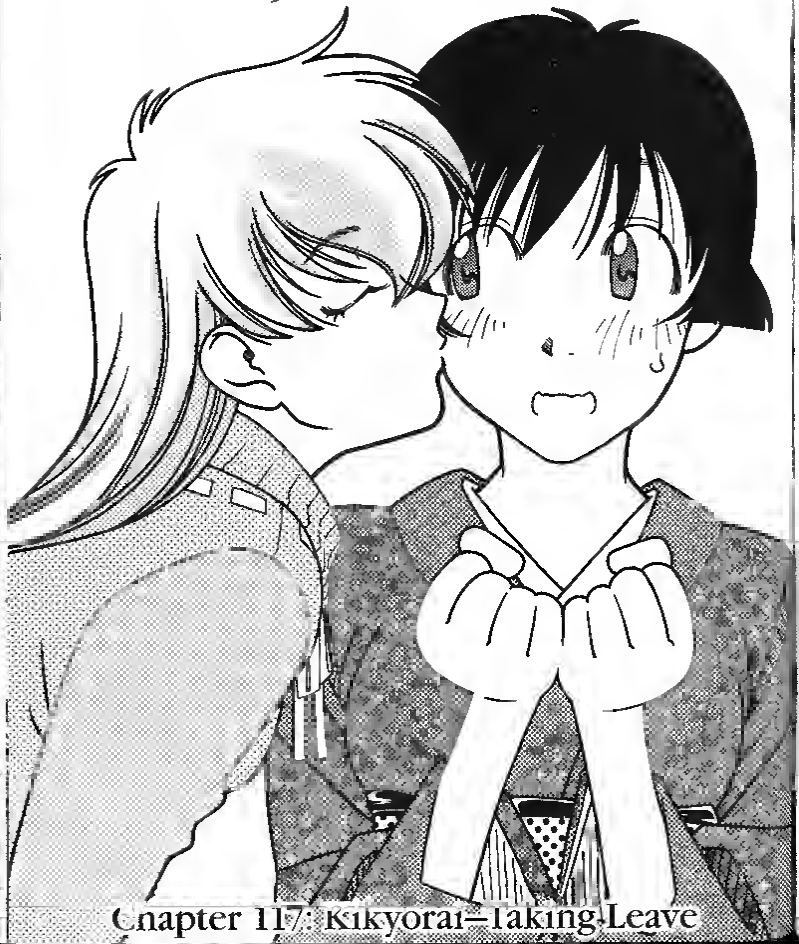
NEVER, EVER...

くわー

I LOVE YOU, AOI-CHAN.
I LOVE YOU.

藍より青し

AI YORI AOSHI



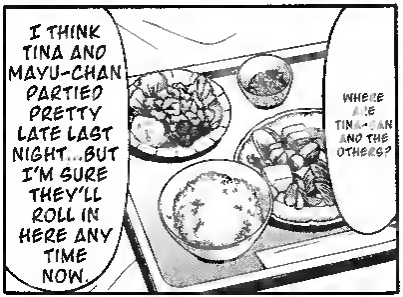
Chapter 117: Kikyorai—Taking Leave

End of Chapter 116: Shoki—Hopes

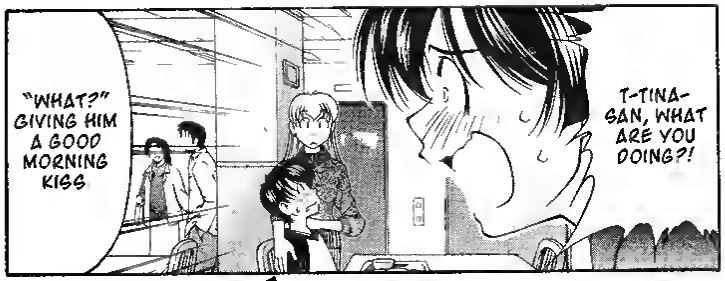
I WISH WE COULD HAVE EATEN MORE GOOD FOOD.
IT WENT BY WAY TOO FAST.

GOOD MORNING, KAORU-SAMA.
G'MORNING, AOI-CHAN.

GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE!


I THINK TINA AND MAYU-CHAN PARTIED PRETTY LATE LAST NIGHT...BUT I'M SURE THEY'LL ROLL IN HERE ANY TIME NOW.
WHERE ARE TINA-CHAN AND THE OTHERS?

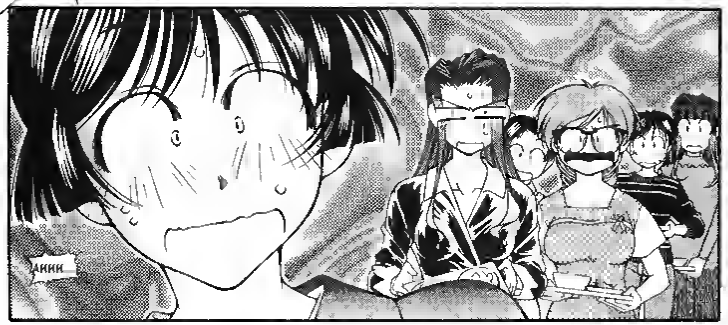
SO, OUR VACATION TO KYUSHU IS FINALLY OVER...


T-TINA-SAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
"WHAT?" GIVING HIM A GOOD MORNING KISS

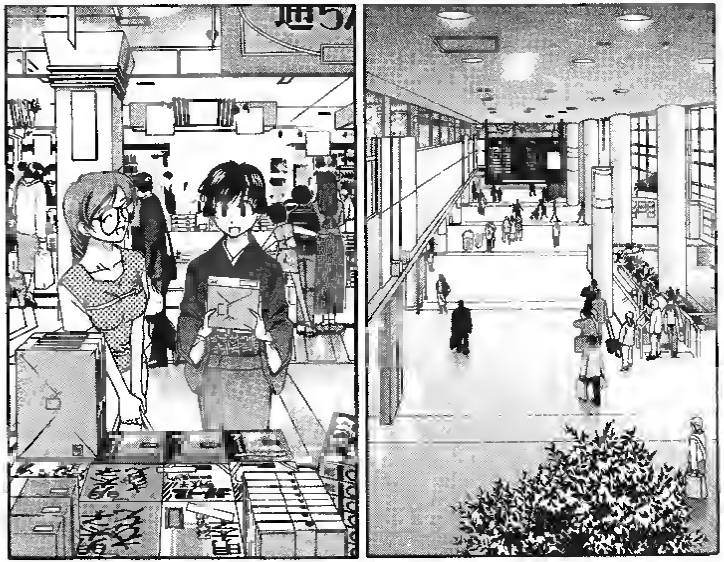
YOU JEALOUS, LANDLADY-SAN?! ONE FOR YOU, TOO!
KYAAH!!

A GOOD MORNING KISS FOR MAYUTCHI, TOO!
CUT IT OUT! NO ONE NEEDS YOUR ANTICS THIS EARLY IN THE MORNING! DON'T YOU EVER SETTLE DOWN?!

MORNIN', KAORU.
WHA-WHAAA-?!!


AHHH

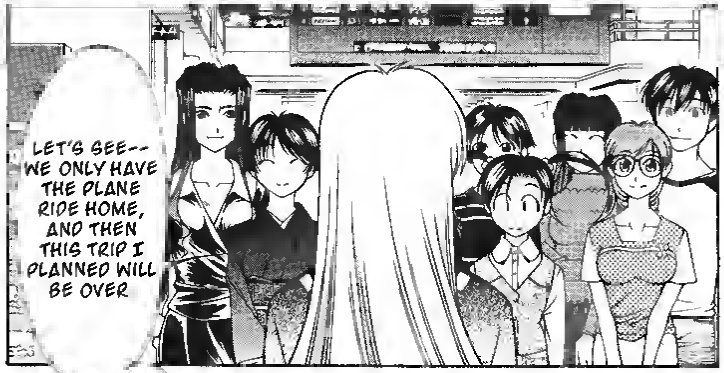
2

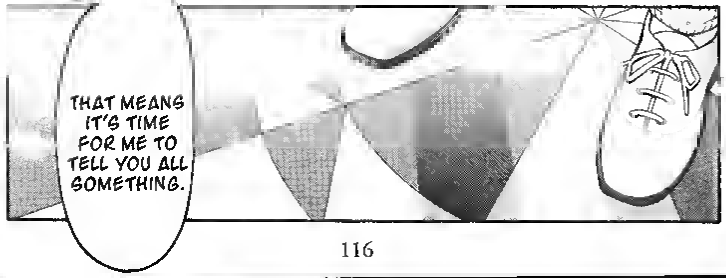


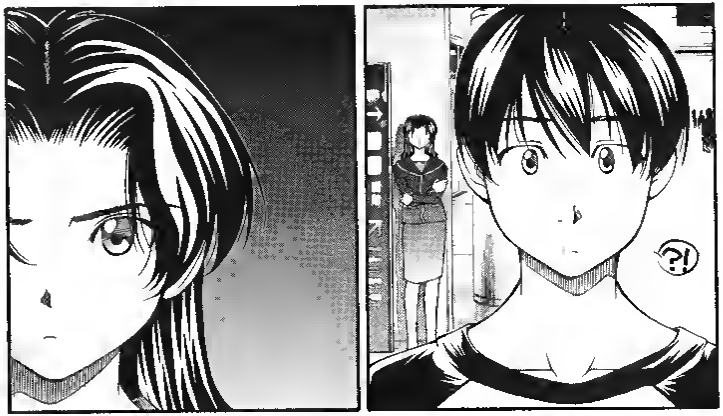
T-TINA-SAN HAS SNAPPED, HASN'T SHE?!

I-I HAVE NO IDEA
WH-WH-WHY IS TINA-SENPAI BEING SO WEIRD?
EEEEEEEK--!!
CHIKARIN WANTS SOME TINA, TOO, EH?! PUCKER UP, SWEETIE!!

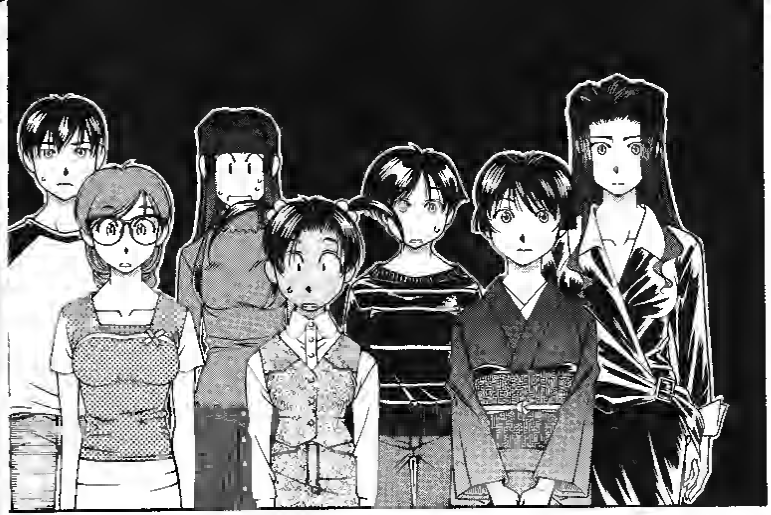
ALL RIGHT! EVERYBODY, GATHER ROUND!!


LET'S SEE-- WE ONLY HAVE THE PLANE RIDE HOME, AND THEN THIS TRIP I PLANNED WILL BE OVER


THAT MEANS IT'S TIME FOR ME TO TELL YOU ALL SOMETHING.


?!

UM--
I, TINA FOSTER...
FUKUOKA



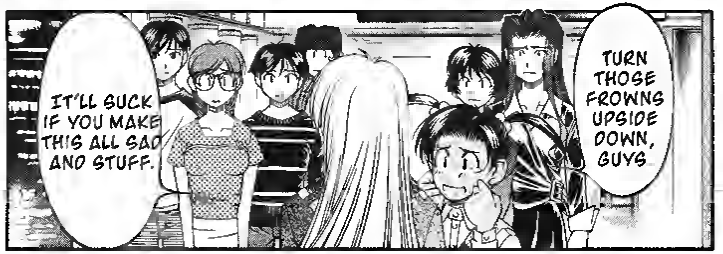
EH!? Y-YOU'RE... YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT, TINA-SAN?

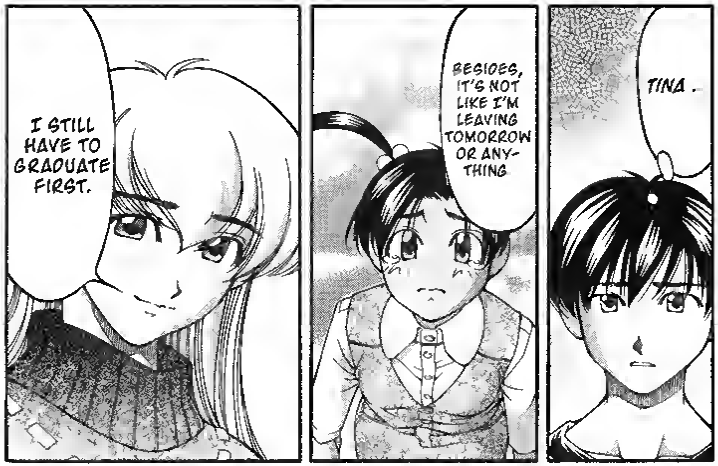
I'M SORRY FOR SPRINGING THIS ON YOU SO SUDDENLY.
IN REALITY, THIS WAS THE PLAN EVEN BEFORE I STARTED COLLEGE HERE.

...AM FINALLY GOING TO BE GOING HOME TO THE UNITED STATES.

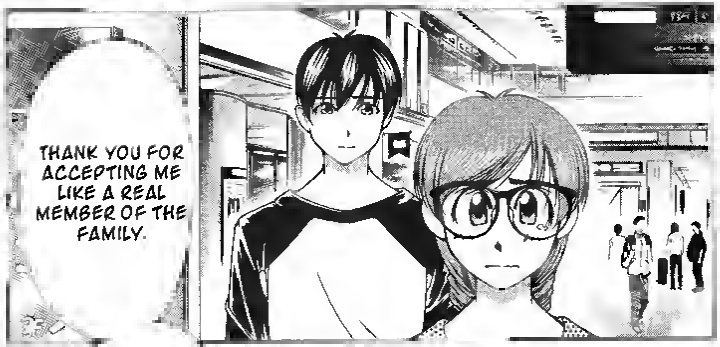
NO!! YOU CAN'T, TINA-ONEECHAN!
NO, NO!! IT'S NOT TRUE!
YOU CAN'T LEAVE US, TINA-ONEECHAN! I WON'T LET YOU!
EEK?!
BUT...
CHIKARIN, SEEING YOURS AND EVERYONE'S FACES REMINDS ME OF HOW HAPPY I REALLY WAS IN JAPAN
AW, THAT'S SWEET, KIDOO

PW-OW! HINA-ONEEHYAN, HYAT HURTS!!


IT'LL SUCK IF YOU MAKE THIS ALL SAD AND STUFF.
TURN THOSE FROWNS UPSIDE DOWN, GUYS


I STILL HAVE TO GRADUATE FIRST.
BESIDES, IT'S NOT LIKE I'M LEAVING TOMORROW OR ANY-THING
TINA.

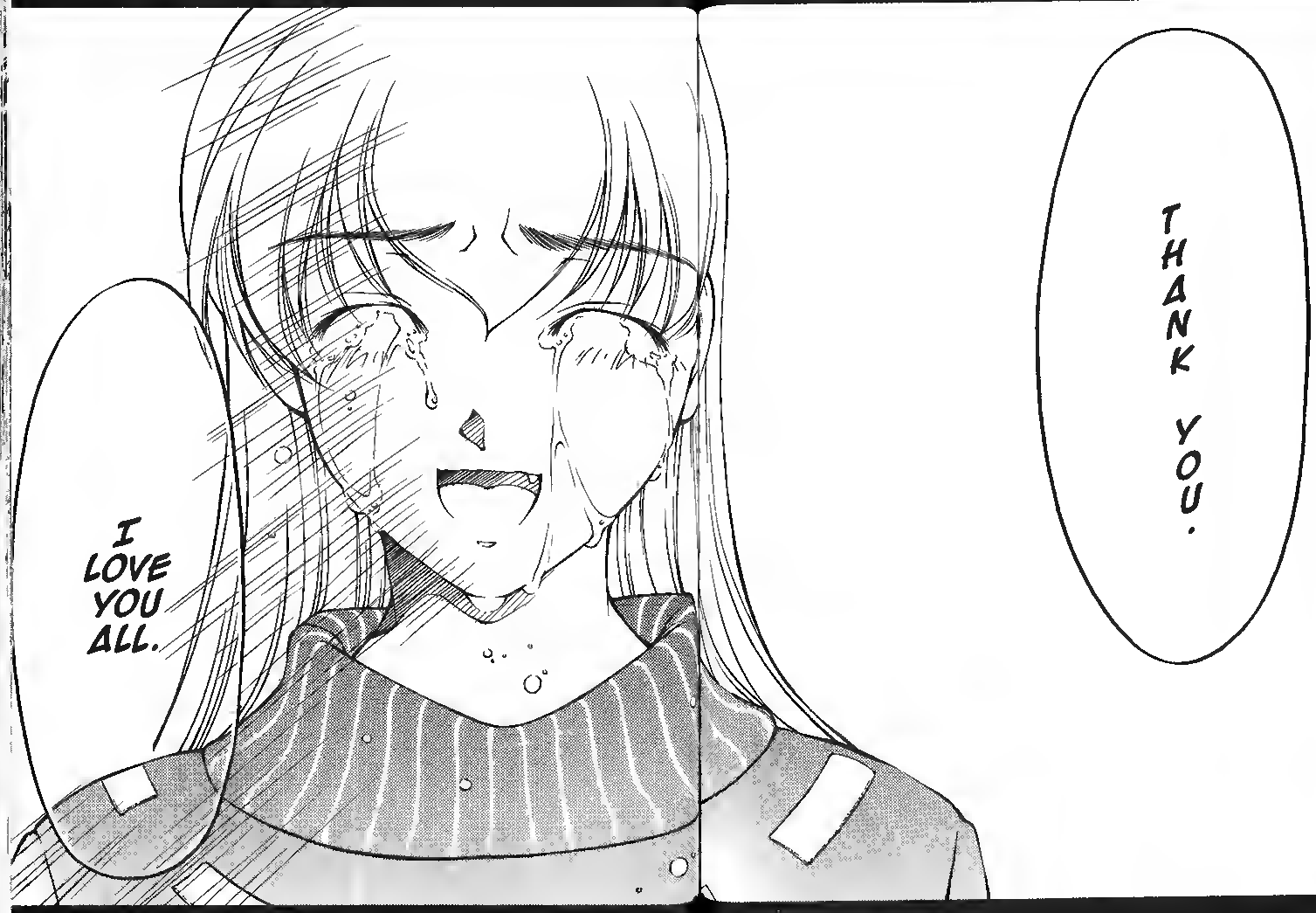
LANDLADY-SAN, MANAGER-SAN, THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME LIVE IN YOUR HOME.


THANK YOU FOR ACCEPTING ME LIKE A REAL MEMBER OF THE FAMILY.

AND THANK YOU FOR ALWAYS PLAYING ALONG WITH MY CRAZY WHIMS.

IT...IT WAS A BLAST
sniffle
I'LL NEVER FORGET HOW MUCH FUN EVERY DAY WAS WITH YOU GUYS

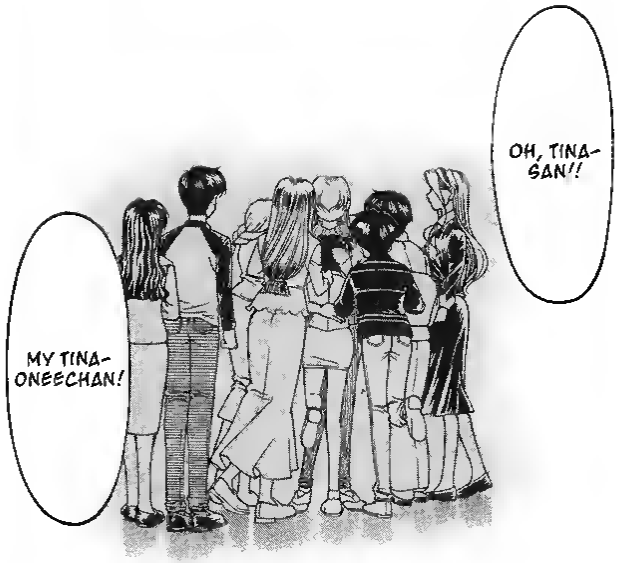
BECAUSE ALL THE DAYS I SPENT WITH THIS GROUP...
...ARE MY BEST MEMORIES...

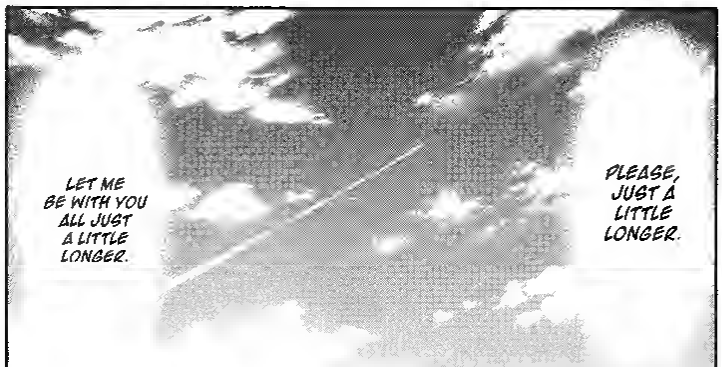

I LOVE YOU ALL.
THANK YOU.

藍より青し

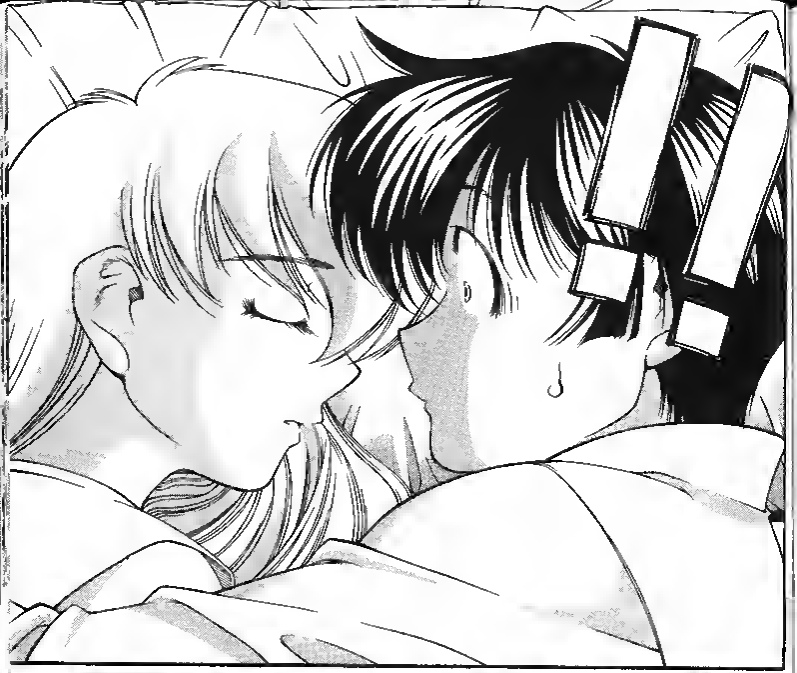
AI YORI AOSHI

Chapter 118 -Yoshimi--Goodwill-





End of Chapter 117: Kikyorai--Taking Leave



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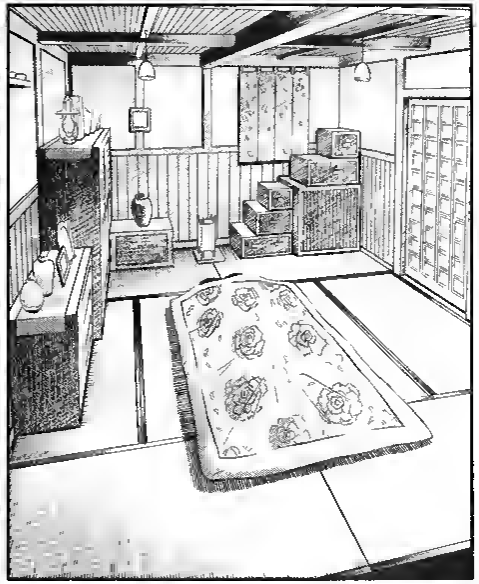
NNN...



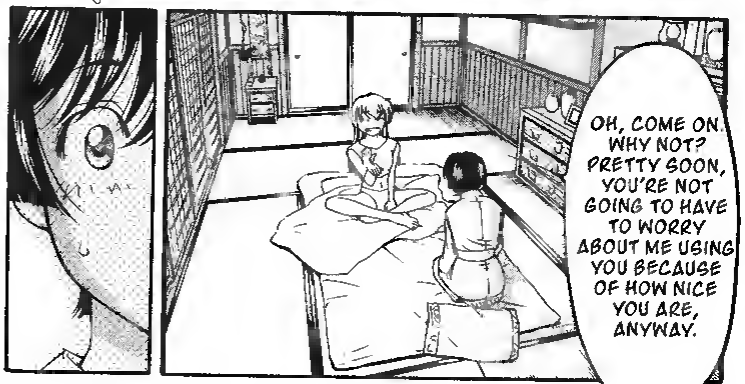
YAAAHH!!
T-TINA-SAN?!

UGG...
OH! GOOD MORNING, LANDLADY-SAN.
WH-WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MY BED, TINA-SAN ?!

I THINK THE BIGGEST SURPRISE, ANYWAY, IS HOW YOU HAVE A HABIT OF CLINGING TO THINGS, LANDLADY-SAN

'S NO BIG DEAL. I JUST GOT KINDA LONELY SLEEPING BY MYSELF.

SO, I THOUGHT I'D TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR KINDNESS, LANDLADY-SAN!
THAT'S NO REASON TO SNEAK IN HERE WHEN I'M ASLEEP!

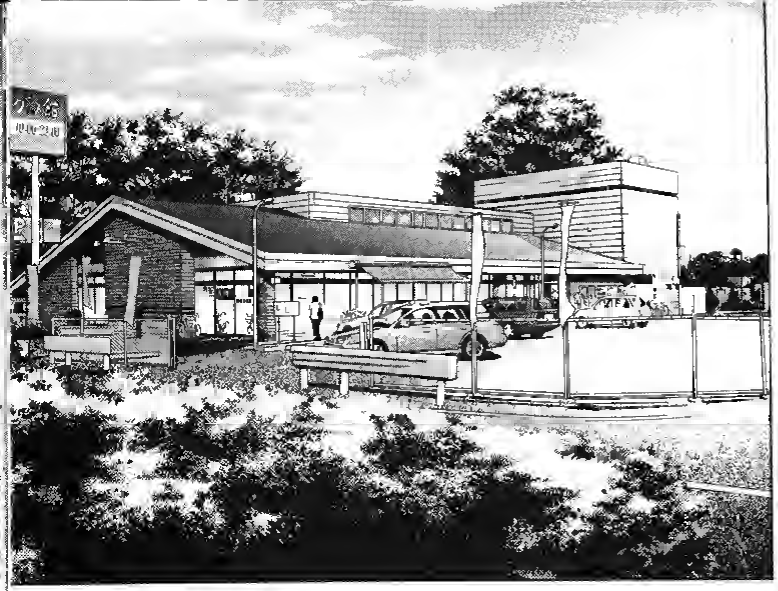

OH, COME ON. WHY NOT? PRETTY SOON, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME USING YOU BECAUSE OF HOW NICE YOU ARE, ANYWAY.

ARE...ARE YOU SAYING SOMETHING HAPPENED?!
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN? I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO CRUSH ME, YOUR LEGS WERE WRAPPED AROUND ME SO TIGHT.

MORNING, KAORU!
CUT THAT OUT!!
What's wrong? It's not like I don't have plenty!
Come back to America with me!
What are you talking about!?

I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO SWITCH TEAMS JUST TO SURVIVE...
NOOOO ~~!!

T-TINA-SAN, PLEASE DON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT THIS ...
O-OKAY, SURE ...



YOU'VE BEEN SPOILING ME WITH MY FAVORITE FOODS SINCE WE GOT HOME.

HMM... NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...
TINA-SAN, IS THERE ANYTHING SPECIAL YOU'D LIKE TO EAT?

IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'M HAPPY TO DO IT, SO PLEASE, ASK FOR WHATEVER YOU DESIRE.

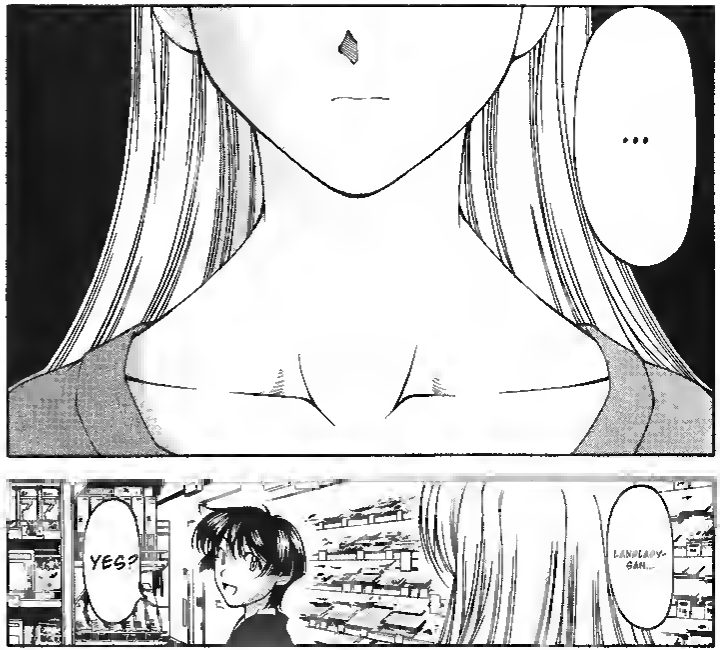
LANDLADY-SAN, YOU CAN COME TO AMERICA WITH US, TOO!

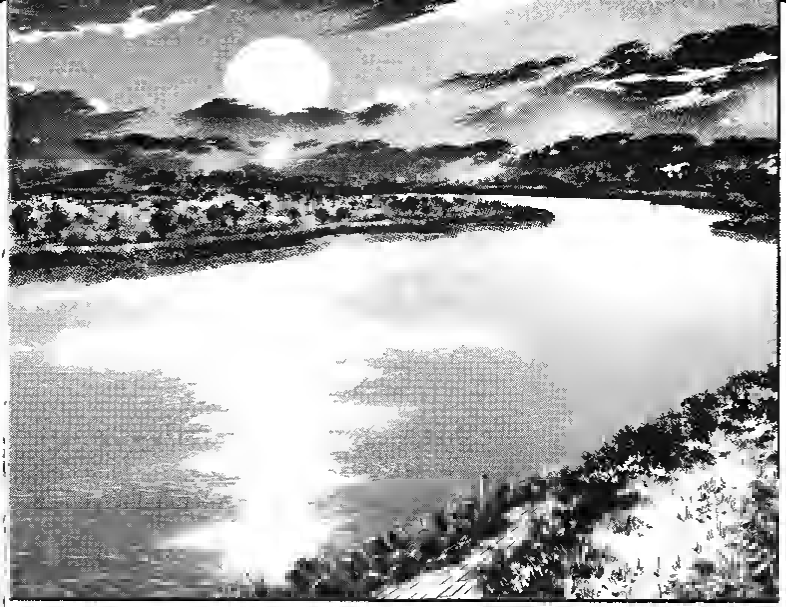
N-NO, STAY CALM, AOI! BECAUSE TINA-SAN IS

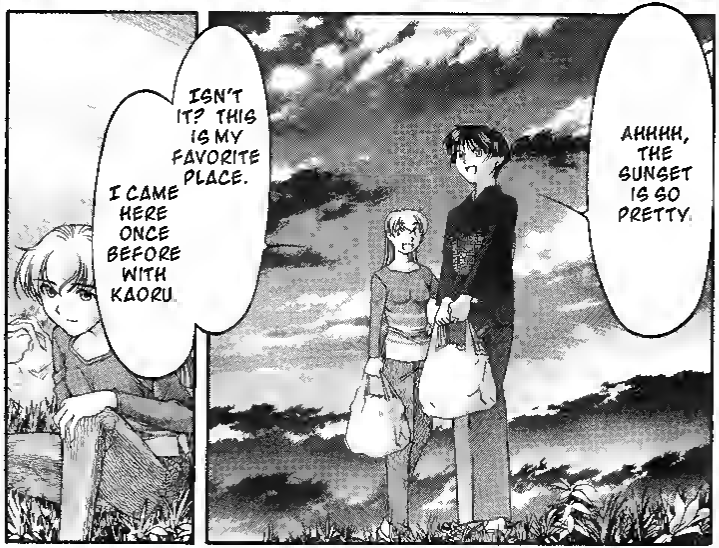
Look, you..
DON'T YOU WANT TO SEE WHAT THE U.S. IS LIKE?

Y-YES...

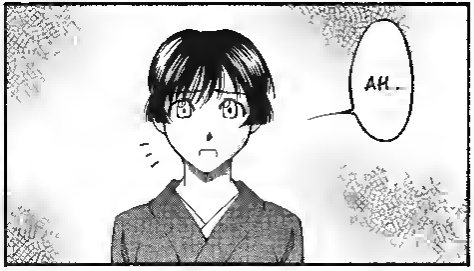
HAW HAW HAW!!
P-PLEASE STOP THAT, TINA-SAN!!
EH?!
BWA-HAHAHA! FINALLY! THE NORMAL LANDLADY-SAN I REMEMBER!
PFF...

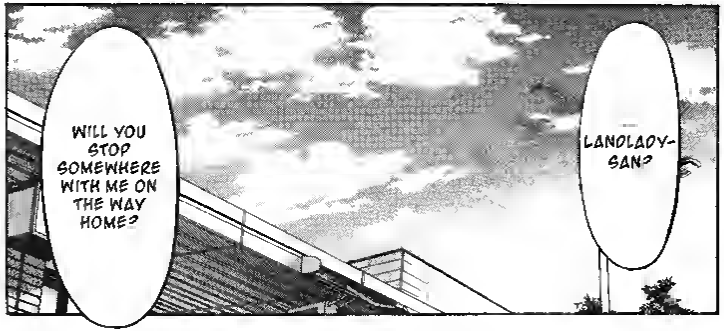

...
YES?
LANDLADY-SAN...
J-JUST A--TINA-SAN!
YOU'RE SO NICE, I CAN'T STOP MYSELF FROM GROPING YOU!
grope
grope
grope
KYAAHH!
OOOOHHH, LANDLADY-SAN, YOU'RE JUST TOO NICE--!!



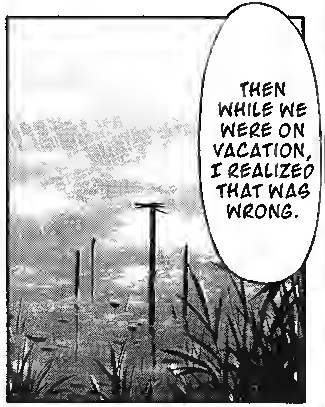

AHHHH, THE SUNSET IS SO PRETTY.
ISN'T IT? THIS IS MY FAVORITE PLACE.
I CAME HERE ONCE BEFORE WITH KAORU.

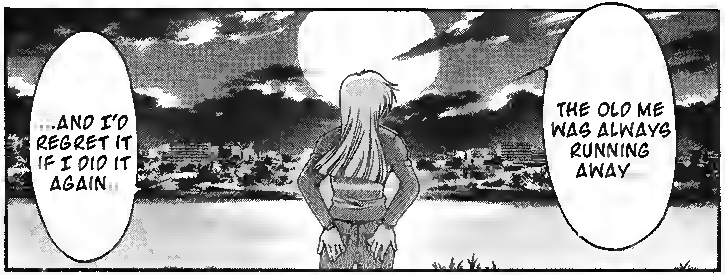
YOU DON'T HAVE TO FUSS OVER ME SO MUCH.
I HAVE A HARD TIME DEALING WITH THAT SORT OF THING, SO IT'S BETTER YOU DON'T.


AH..


LANDLADY-SAN?
WILL YOU STOP SOMEWHERE WITH ME ON THE WAY HOME?

I HAD TO SUCK IT UP AND BE STRONG.

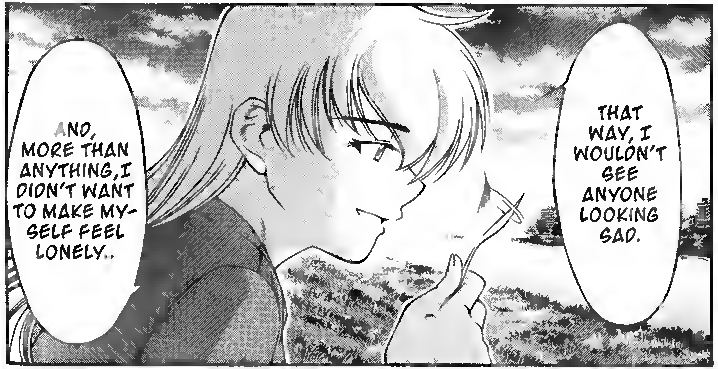

THEN WHILE WE WERE ON VACATION, I REALIZED THAT WAS WRONG.

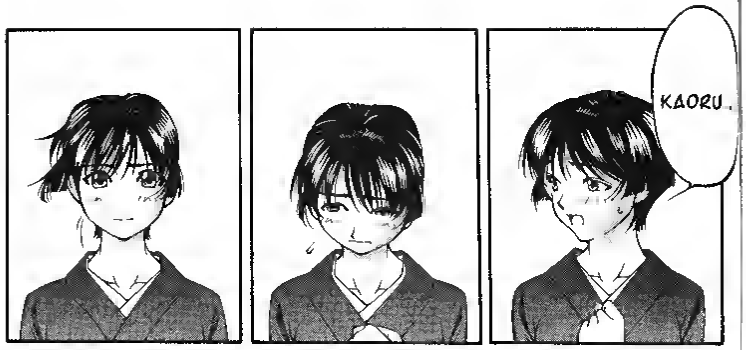

...AND I'D REGRET IT IF I DID IT AGAIN...
THE OLD ME WAS ALWAYS RUNNING AWAY

...ALL THE MEMORIES I MISSED OUT ON BY BEING SCARED.
I DON'T THINK ANYTHING WILL MAKE UP FOR...

YOU KNOW...I WAS ACTUALLY PLANNING ON GOING BACK TO AMERICA WITHOUT TELLING ANYONE

REALLY?

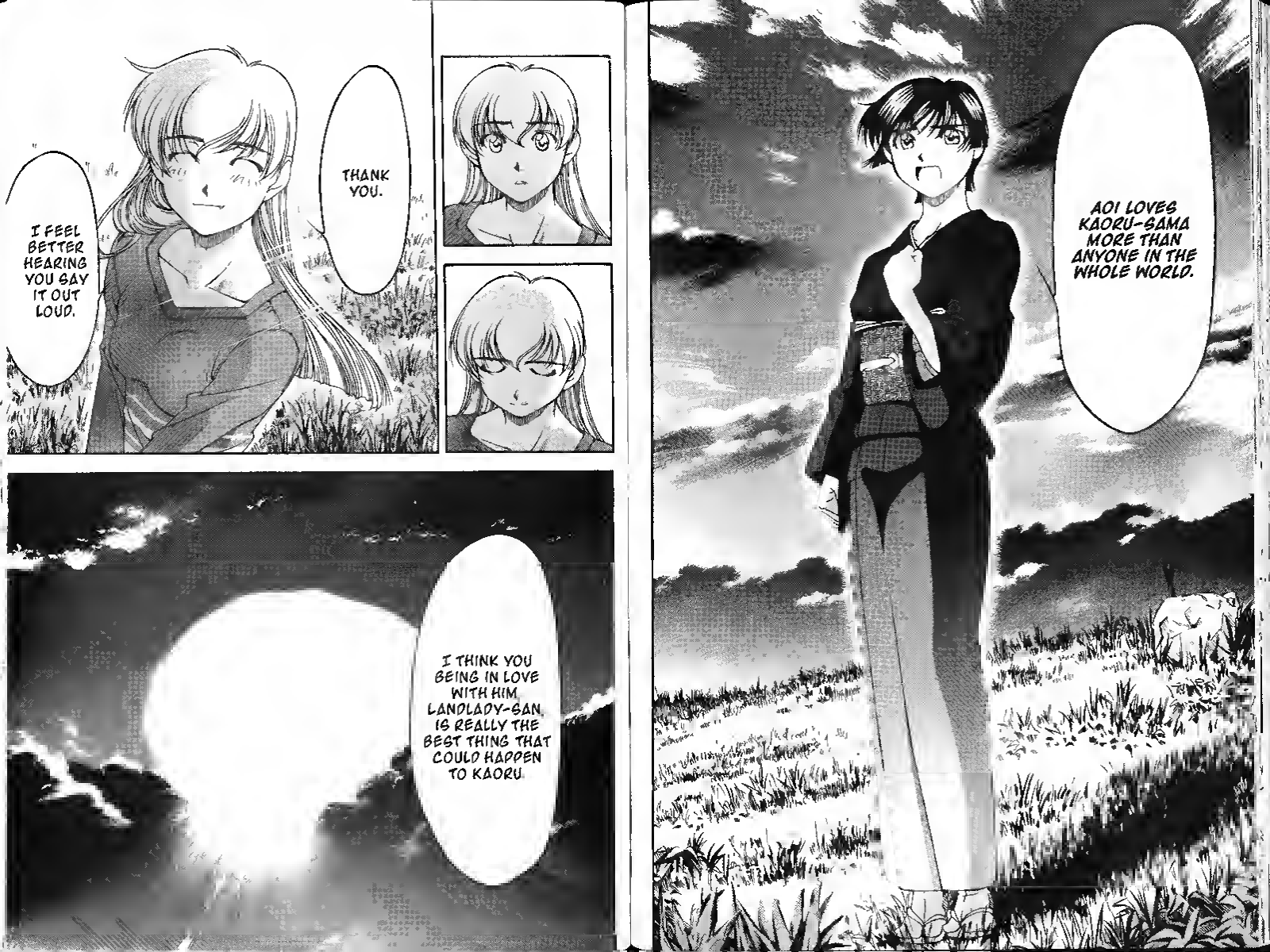

AND, MORE THAN ANYTHING,I DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE MY-SELF FEEL LONELY..
THAT WAY, I WOULDN'T SEE ANYONE LOOKING SAD.


KAORU.

THAT'S WHY I WANT TO HEAR IT FROM YOUR OWN LIPS, LANDLADY-SAN.

AOI LOVES KAORU-SAMA.

LANDLADY-SAN, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT KAORU..?
BECAUSE IF YOU DON'T LOVE HIM, I WILL


AOI LOVES KAORU-SAMA MORE THAN ANYONE IN THE WHOLE WORLD.
THANK YOU.
I FEEL BETTER HEARING YOU SAY IT OUT LOUD.
I THINK YOU BEING IN LOVE WITH HIM, LANDLADY-SAN, IS REALLY THE BEST THING THAT COULD HAPPEN TO KAORU.

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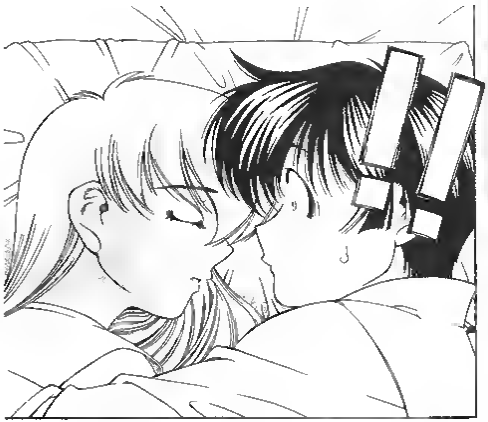
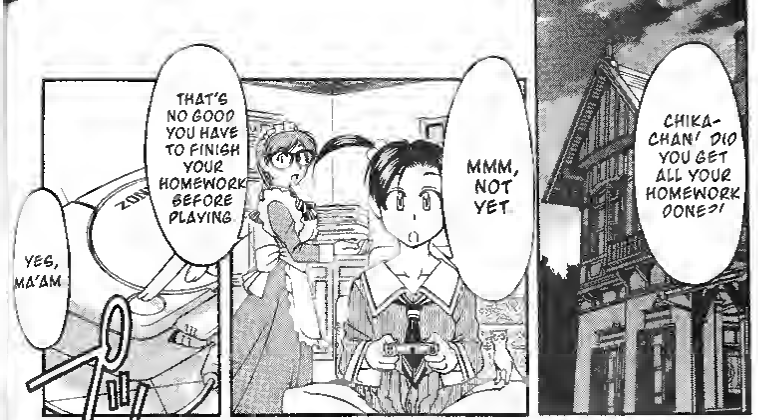
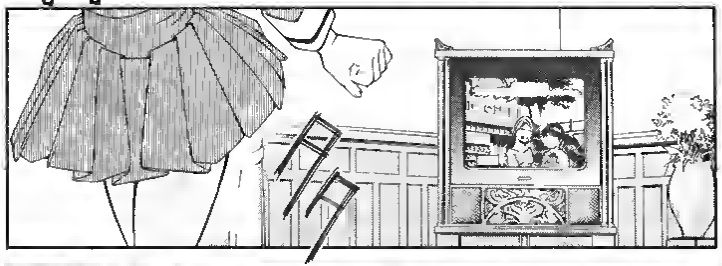
AI YORI AOSHI




CHIKA-CHAN! DID YOU GET ALL YOUR HOMEWORK DONE?!
MMM, NOT YET
THAT'S NO GOOD YOU HAVE TO FINISH YOUR HOMEWORK BEFORE PLAYING
YES, MA'AM



End of Chapter 118 Yoshimi—Goodwill

Ai-Ao Theatre Part 30 When You Hear "Hakata"

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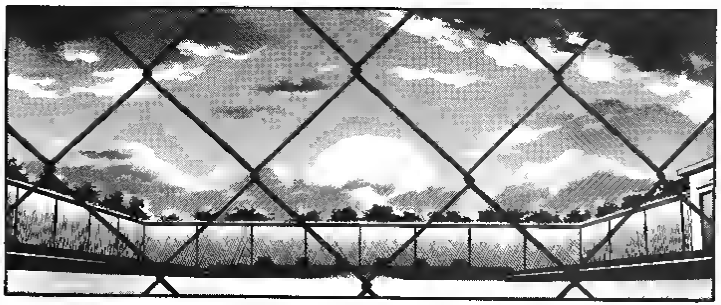
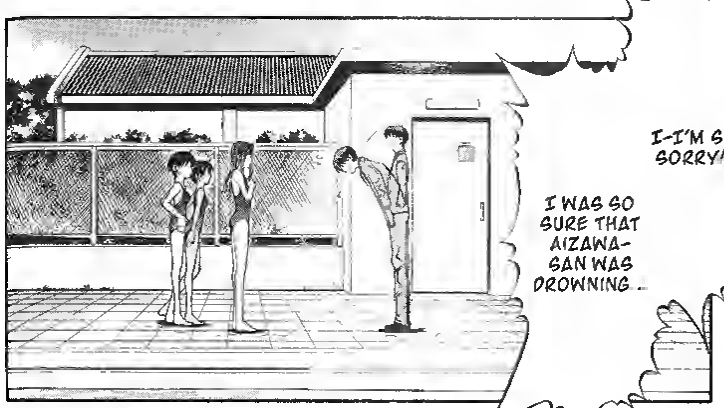
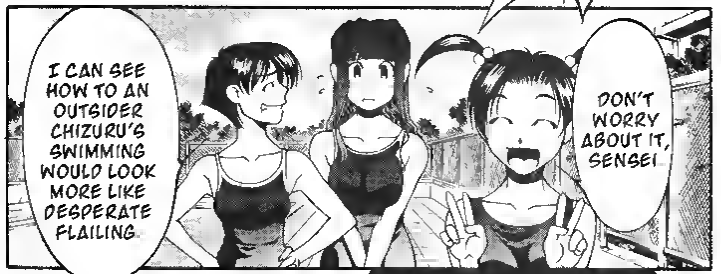
AI YORI AOSHI

Special Chapter: Hatsukoi—First Love

Kouichiro Sasakura-sensei.



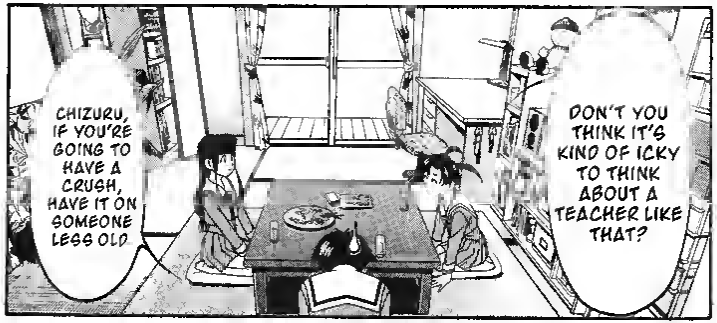

I-I'M SO SORRY!!
I WAS SO SURE THAT AIZAWA-SAN WAS DROWNING..

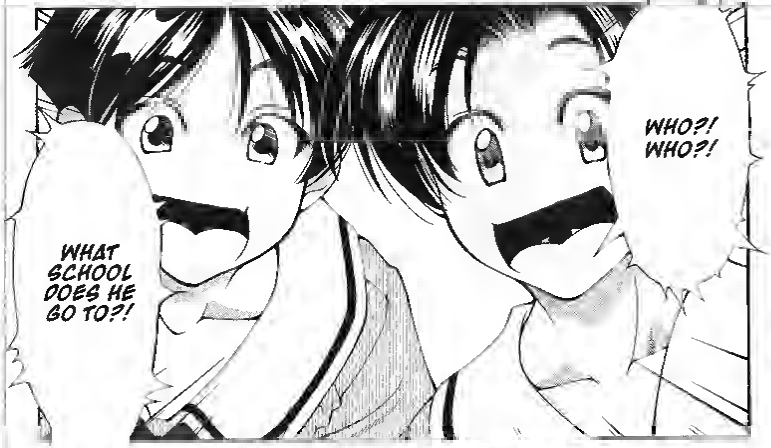

I CAN SEE HOW TO AN OUTSIDER CHIZURU'S SWIMMING WOULD LOOK MORE LIKE DESPERATE FLAILING.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, SENSEI

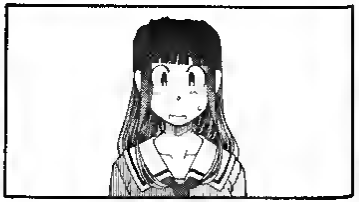
The man I fell in love with is a student teacher who came to our school a week ago

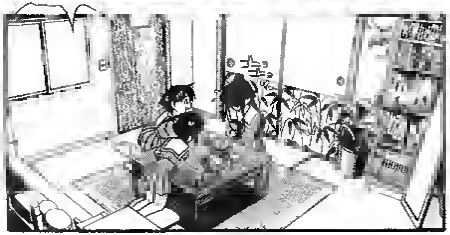
SASAKURA...
...SENSEI?

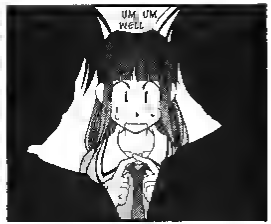
WHAAA--?!! YOU'RE CRUSHING ON SOMEONE, CHIZURU?!


CHIZURU, IF YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A CRUSH, HAVE IT ON SOMEONE LESS OLD
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S KIND OF ICKY TO THINK ABOUT A TEACHER LIKE THAT?


WHO?! WHO?!
WHAT SCHOOL DOES HE GO TO?!






UM, UM, WELL...

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO HANDLE THIS?
IF HE WAS MORE OUR AGE, WE COULD GET SOME ADVICE FROM THIS SECRET NOTEBOOK, BUT...

DO WE KNOW ANYONE WHO'S GOING OUT WITH AN OLDER MAN?
?!

I, I'M SORRY. I'VE NEVER HAD SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPEN BEFORE, SO I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.

I APOLO-GIZE...

CHIKA-CHAN, NATSUKI-CHAN...

I KNOW YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT IT, BUT IT'S PROBABLY NORMAL.
AWWW, MAN! YOU CAN'T HELP IT!!

R-REALLY?!!
SURE, OKAY
R-BUT IF YOU DON'T HAVE TIME, WE COULD JUST GRAB A MEAL OR SOMETHIN'
OR MAYBE WE CAN GO SHOPPING TOGETHER
Y'KNOW WHAT-EVER

I COULD ACTUALLY USE A BREAK
BESIDES, WHO COULD REFUSE AN INVITATION FROM YOU, CHIKA-CHAN?

OH! THANK YOU, ONIICHAN!! THANK YOU!
DAAH! HEY, COME ON!

ONII-CHAN, DO YOU HAVE A MINUTE ?

I WAS THINKING IT MIGHT BE NICE TO GO SOMEWHERE FUN TOGETHER THIS WEEKEND
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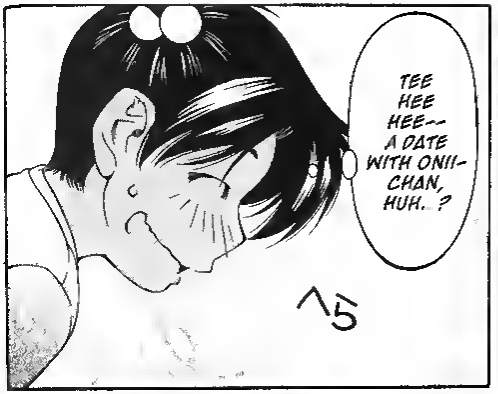
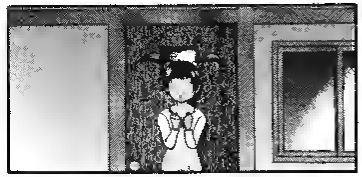
SURE. WHAT'S UP, CHIKA-CHAN?
UH, YOU SEE...

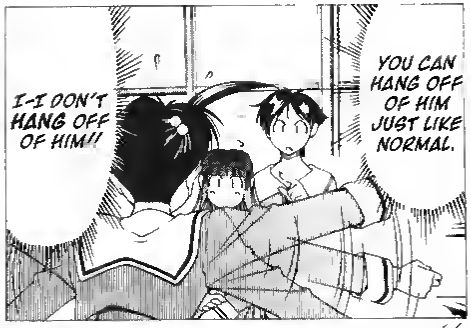
next step
COME ON, ONII-CHAN, LET'S HURRY!!


TEE HEE HEE-- A DATE WITH ONII-CHAN, HUH..?

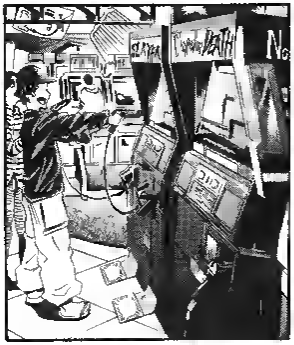


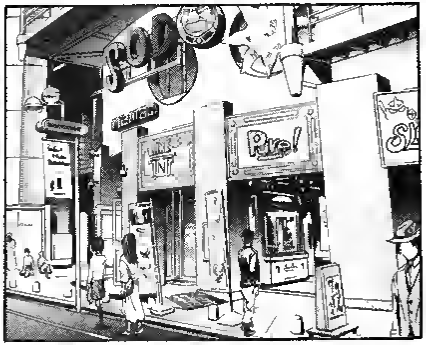
N-NO, CHIKA! THIS IS FOR CHIZURU-CHAN...

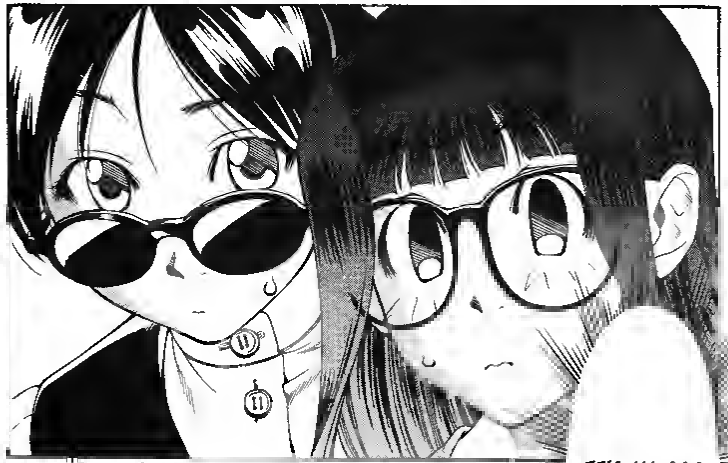
HEE HEE


I-I DON'T HANG OFF OF HIM!!
YOU CAN HANG OFF OF HIM JUST LIKE NORMAL.

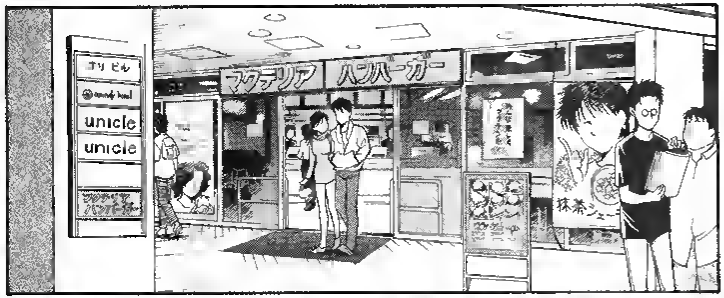
I TOLD THAT BRAT SHE HANGS ON HIM!! I WAS RIGHT!




Pic!


IT'S ALL SET, CHIKA.

WE'LL FOLLOW YOU GUYS AROUND AND STUDY WHAT YOU DO.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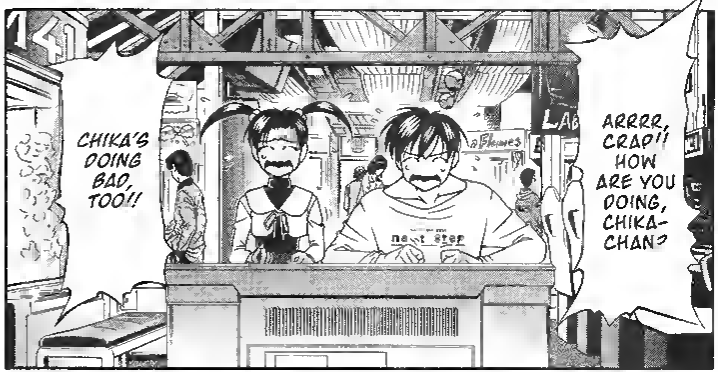
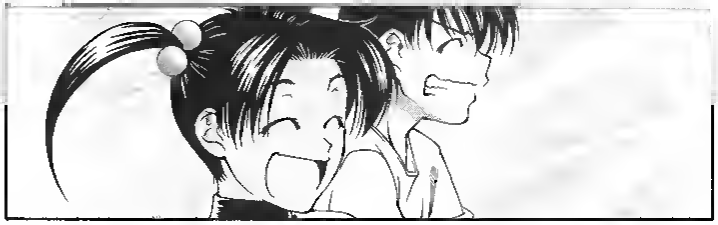
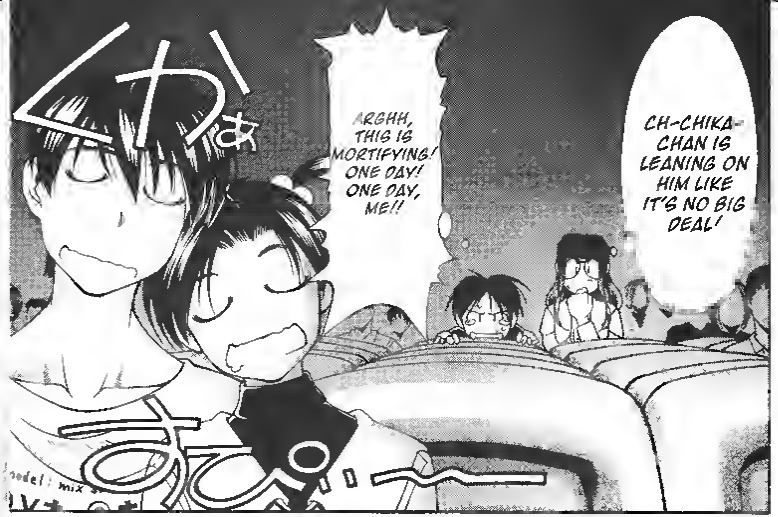
IT IS? LET ME TRY IT!!
WOW! THIS NEW MILKSHAKE FLAVOR IS TASTY.

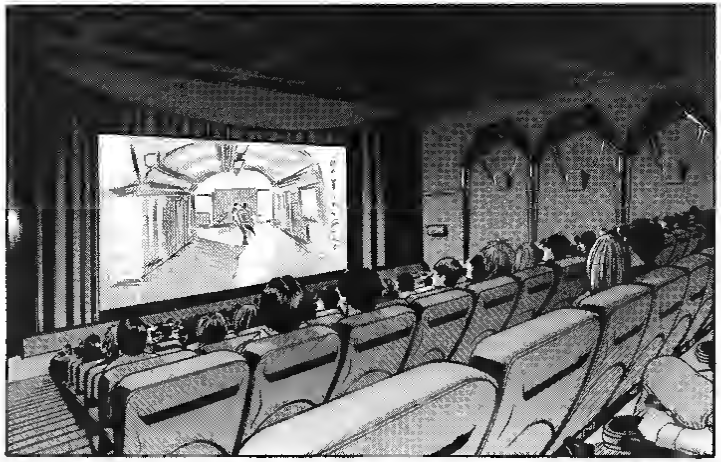
I-I WONDER IF I COULD BE SO CALM ABOUT IT...
WHAT?!! THAT'S PRACTICALLY AN INDIRECT KISS!

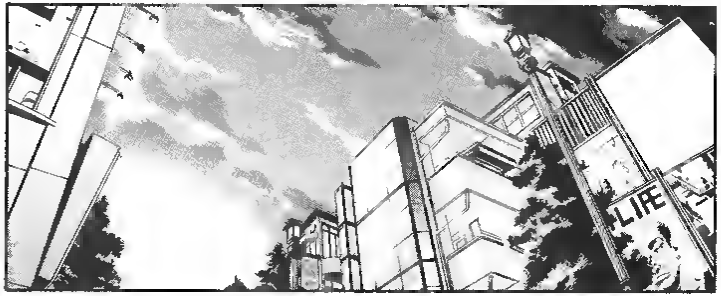

CHIKA'S DOING BAD, TOO!!
ARRRR, CRAP!! HOW ARE YOU DOING, CHIKA-CHAN?



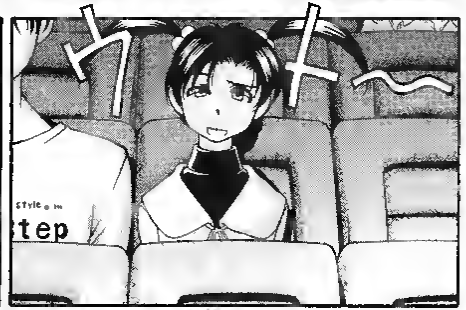
DAMMIT. THAT'LL BE ME ONE DAY ...
THEY LOOK LIKE THEY'RE HAVING FUN.


CH-CHIKA-CHAN IS LEANING ON HIM LIKE IT'S NO BIG DEAL!
ARGHH, THIS IS MORTIFYING! ONE DAY! ONE DAY, ME!!

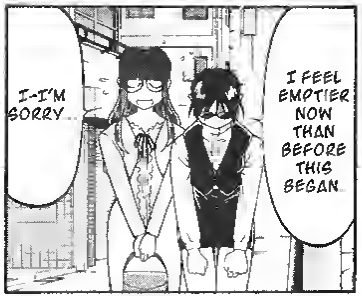



LIFE

N-NO, I HAVE TO WATCH THE MOVIE...

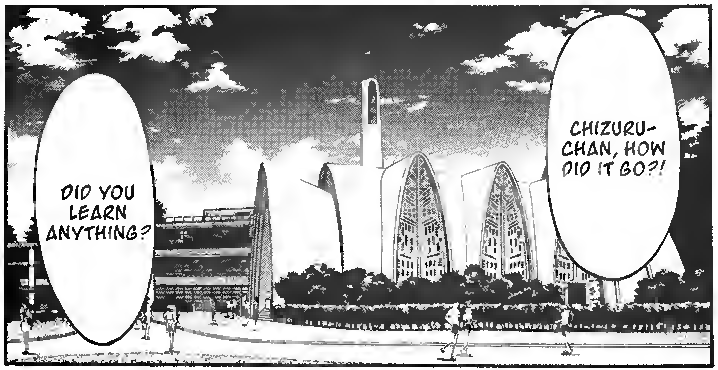


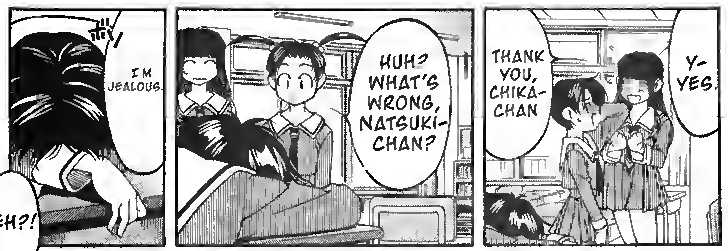
I NEVER REALIZED THAT CHIKA HAD SUCH A LOVEY-DOVEY SIDE TO HER
THANK GOODNESS IT'S ALMOST TIME TO GO HOME...


I FEEL EMOTIER NOW THAN BEFORE THIS BEGAN...
I-I'M SORRY...

BUT LAST NIGHT I WAS SO HAPPY I COULDN'T SLEEP...

I-I GUESS NOT.
HUH?! YOU SURE IT'S THIS WAY?
I TH-THINK SO... DON'T YOU?
THIS IS AS DARING AS IT GETS, RIGHT?

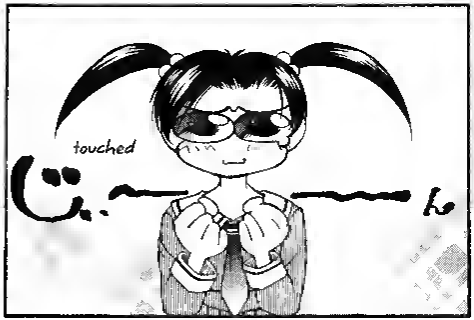

DID YOU LEARN ANYTHING?
CHIZURU-CHAN, HOW DID IT GO?!


I'M JEALOUS.
EH?!
HUH? WHAT'S WRONG, NATSUKI-CHAN?
THANK YOU, CHIKA-CHAN
Y-YES.

HOTEL WILD
Hotel
REST ¥3500 ～
STAY ¥5500 ～
CHIKA HOW FAR ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE THIS?!

...IT'S ABOUT BEING IN LOVE.
HE JUST SO HAPPENS TO BE OLDER.

YEAH, YEAH! THAT'S RIGHT!!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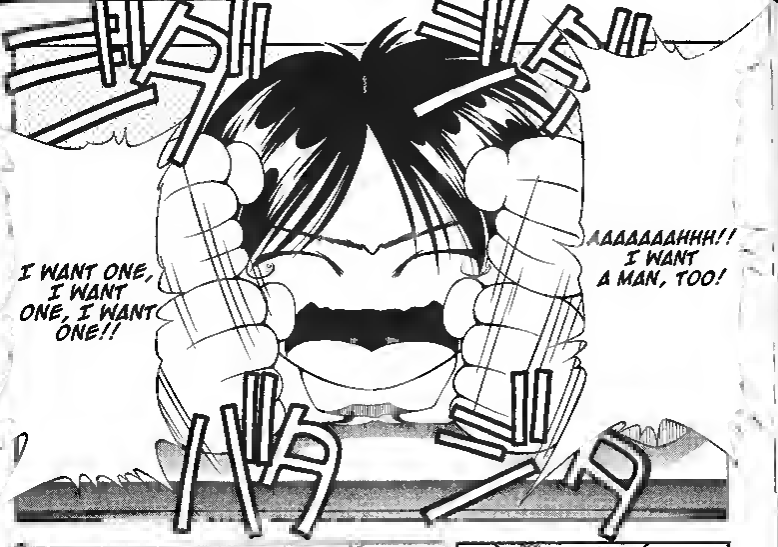
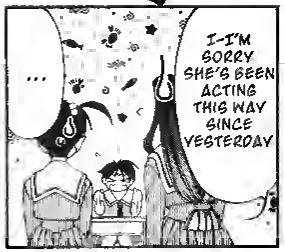
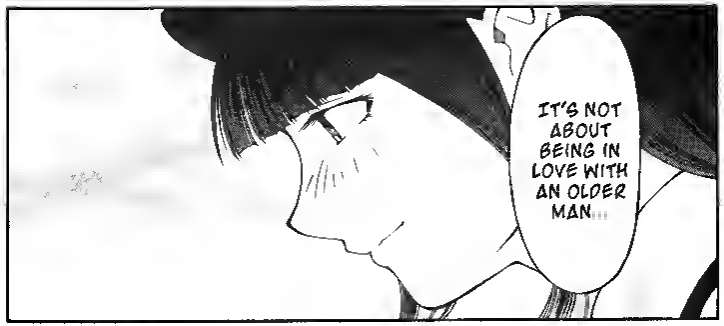
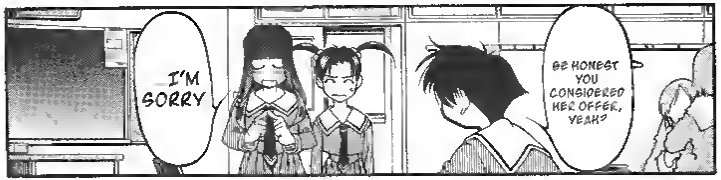

I WANT ONE, I WANT ONE, I WANT ONE!!
AAAAAAAHHH!! I WANT A MAN, TOO!

...THAT MAYBE AN AGE DIFFERENCE DOESN'T MATTER THAT MUCH.
THE WAY YOU GUYS HAD SO MUCH FUN WITH SO LITTLE EFFORT, IT MADE ME THINK...


...
I-I'M SORRY SHE'S BEEN ACTING THIS WAY SINCE YESTERDAY

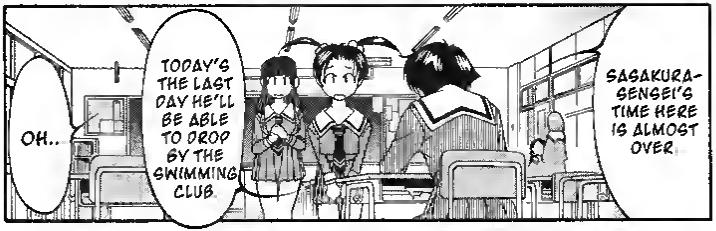

IT'S NOT ABOUT BEING IN LOVE WITH AN OLDER MAN...

I'LL BE FINE!!
FOR ONCE, I WANT TO EXPRESS HOW I FEEL IN MY OWN WORDS.

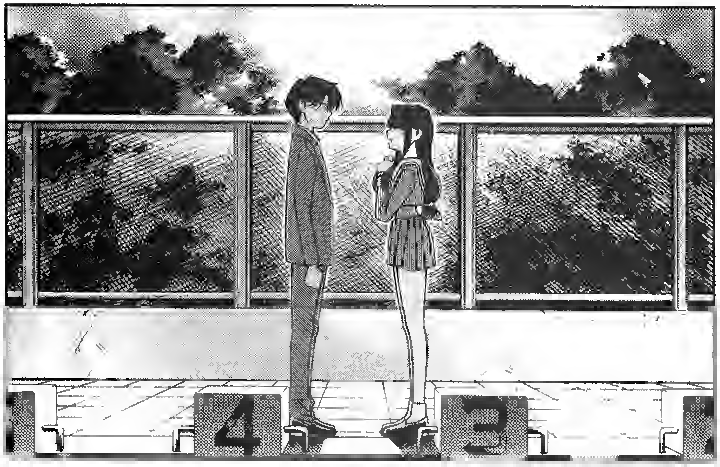

I'M SORRY
BE HONEST YOU CONSIDERED HER OFFER, YEAH?

EEEHH?! TELL HIM ALREADY?

...SO, YOU GONNA TELL HIM TODAY?


OH..
TODAY'S THE LAST DAY HE'LL BE ABLE TO DROP BY THE SWIMMING CLUB.
SASAKURA-SENSEI'S TIME HERE IS ALMOST OVER.

CHIZURU-CHAN, CAN YOU DO IT?! BECAUSE IF YOU WANT, CHIKA WILL TELL HIM FOR YOU!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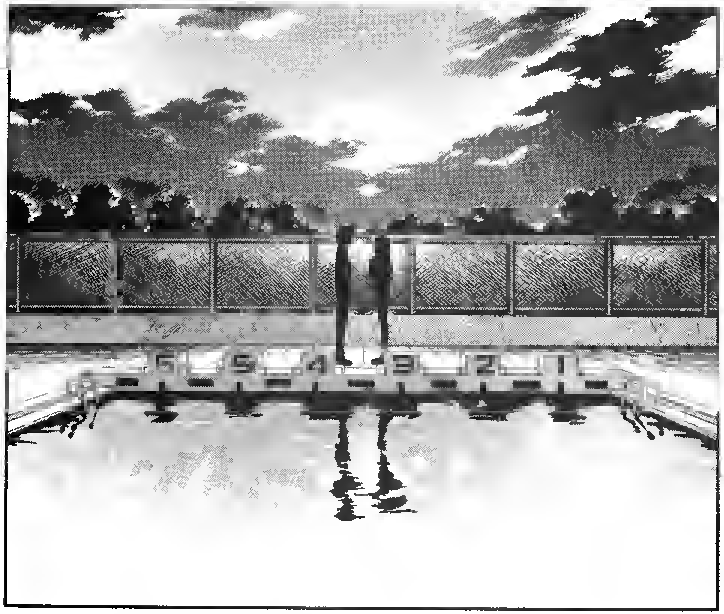
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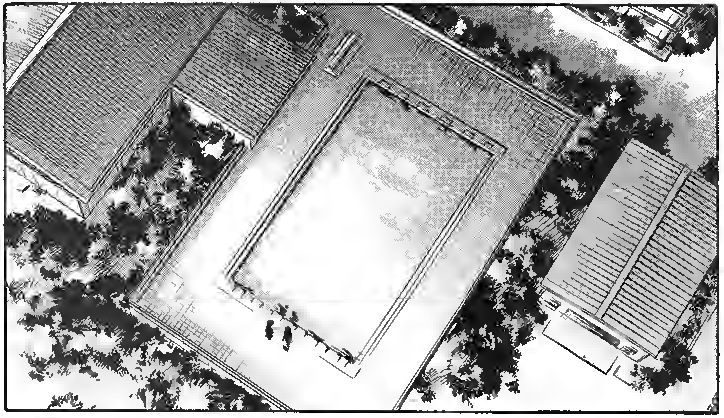
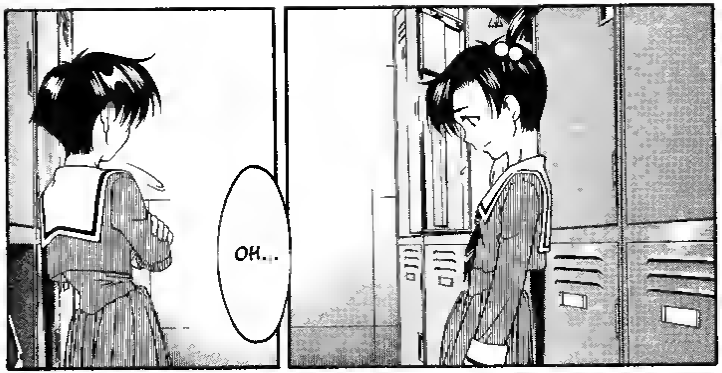
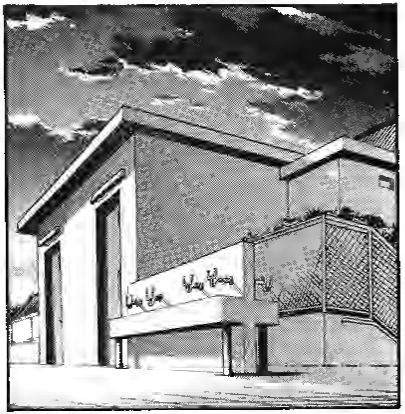


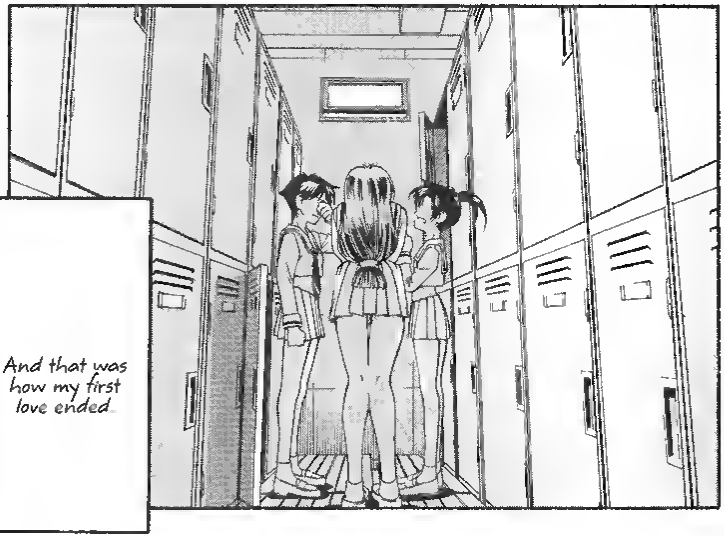

OH...

I WAS THE ONE WHO GOT DUMPED, SO WHY..
CHIKA-CHAN, NATSUKI-CHAN, IT'S WEIRD

HEY
HOW'D IT GO?



I GOT REJECTED
NOT WELL ..

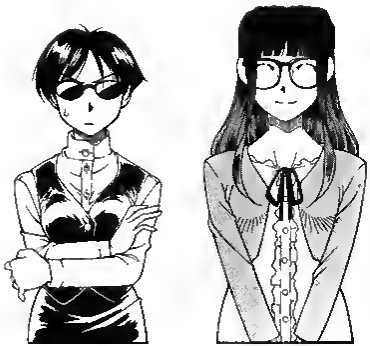


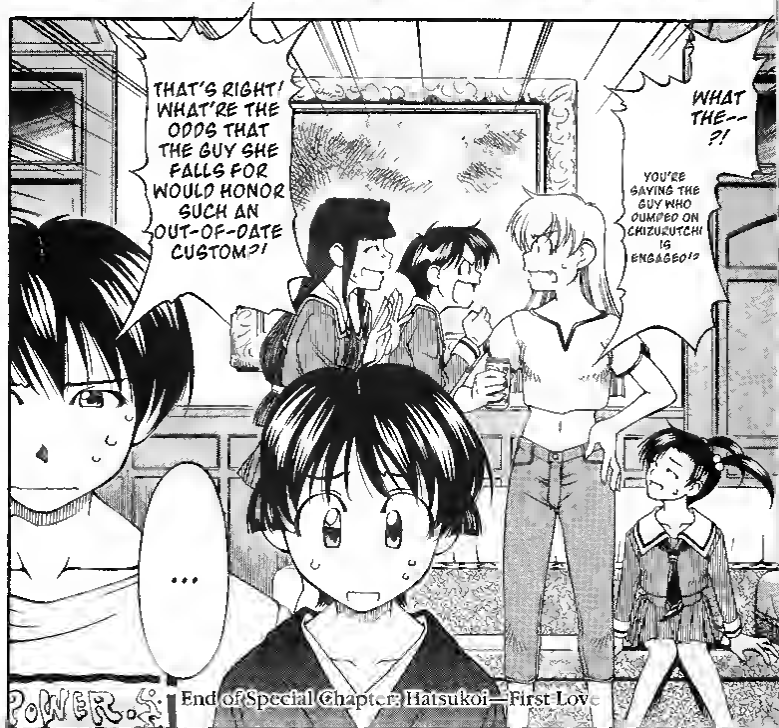
And that was how my first love ended.

I'm more blessed than I've ever been
...proved themselves to be precious, irreplaceable friends
I can't imagine myself ever being happier than this
It's strange, though. I didn't get depressed
...and Natsuki-chan...
Chika-chan...

藍より青し

Ai Yori Aoshi




WHAT THE--?!
YOU'RE SAYING THE GUY WHO DUMPED ON CHIZURUTCHI IS ENGAGED!?
THAT'S RIGHT! WHAT'RE THE ODDS THAT THE GUY SHE FALLS FOR WOULD HONOR SUCH AN OUT-OF-DATE CUSTOM?!
...
POWER-S
End of Special Chapter: Hatsukoi—First Love

NEXT TIME IN

藍より青し
AI YORI AOSHI

After she resolves to tell everyone that she and Kaoru are in love, Aoi receives a phone call telling her that her father has collapsed. Sick with worry, Aoi travels alone to see him...only to discover a horrible twist of fate instead!

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